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MANUFACTURING CONSENT OR PLAYING THE GAME?

**AN ANALYSIS OF GENDER POWER RELATIONS IN TWO SPORT
RELATED ORGANISATIONS**

BAXTER, Lucy Catherine

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

2002

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this study is to examine the dynamics under-pinning the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations within two sport organisations. Across society we have images of women making ground and experiencing far greater prospects than ever before. Yet, on the other hand, this is bound up with continuous examples of little progress in work. For instance, while there are more opportunities for women across work than at any other point in the 20th Century, they continue to be segregated from men in a large number of jobs. Similar gendered patterns of progress are reflected in sport. There are now far more female participants in sport, however they remain concentrated in 'appropriate' sports which reflect historical images of femininity. Broadly, sport and work also dictate stereotypical images for male participants. While broad levels of change are occurring across society, central to this thesis is whether dominant patterns of gender relations are transformed or reproduced at the micro level of sport-related work. Critically sport organisations are selected because sport's history continues to demonstrate patterns of male dominance. Secondly, the growth of sport provision has occurred in a service area, an arena traditionally dominated by women workers. Finally, sport is one of the few sectors which traverses both the public and private industries, providing the basis for a comparative study. Therefore, employment within sport provides an opportunity to examine the ways in which gender power relations are challenged or reproduced when two diverse sets of relations meet. The theoretical framework draws heavily from feminist theory, particularly radical, socialist feminist and post-structuralism. A qualitative research strategy provides the framework for a comparative case study methodology. Seventy-five interviews were conducted across the two case study organisations, which are located in the North. Past Times is a contracted out leisure centre and Sporting Goods a privately owned sports clothing and equipment firm. Both companies are in the service industry but come from two diverse backgrounds. Sporting Goods developed from a manufacturing heritage and Past Times is breaking away from direct local authority control as a result of CCT. At the time of the research both establishments were experiencing high levels of organisational change. While Past Times breaks with tradition in having a female manager and Sporting Goods contrasts with a traditional management structure, hegemonic masculinity dominated across both organisations. Overall gender power relations were reproduced through day-to-day practices that appeal to, and perpetuate, common sense understandings of men and women's roles at work. The sport environment provided a critical site for the strengthening of homosocial relationships among men and enabled the identification of three interacting components of gender: bodies, identities and sexualities. These components together contribute to the ongoing construction of a logic of difference which is more highly defined in the sport environment.

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Thank you all very much.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the century: "The better paid professions were mainly barred to women, there were still only 553 women doctors in Britain by 1912; women were excluded from the upper ranks of the civil service, the law and accountancy" (Rowbotham, 1997, p. 22)

'SKIRTING' THE ISSUE

Rowbotham's quote highlights just how much the opportunities available for women in the UK have increased between 1900 and 2000. In 1900 women did not have the vote¹ and there were no female representatives in Parliament. Higher education remained a bastion of upper class male dominance in the early part of the 20th Century and sporting participation at both the local and world levels remained dominated by men. In the 21st Century, a reflection on trends across society contrasts radically with 100 years before. In the 1997 election the number of women entering Parliament doubled to 121 seats; Moira Stewart, Dawn French, Helen Rollason, Mary Robinson, Majorie Scardino, Nicola Horlick, Dame Pauline Neville-Jones and Stella Rimmington are just a few of the women whose achievements have made headlines in news media, entertainment, sport, politics, business, civil service and intelligence work. There are now 20,000 female football players registered with the FA, in the Atlanta Olympics women competed in 35% of all events, the highest level ever (IOC, 2000). At Sydney 2000 for the first time in history women will compete in the same number of team sports as men (IOC, 2000). Women's entry to the armed forces has been higher in the last decade than at any other time and they have made inroads to the police force and fire services.

At a glance, society *is* changing as greater opportunities are afforded to women at work and leisure. Vast inroads in the world of work have occurred with women entering a broader array of jobs than ever before (Bradley, 1999; Hakim, 1997) and enjoying a wider variety of leisure and sporting pursuits (Hargreaves, 1994). However, the extent of these 'changes' and whether they offer new alternatives to women, away from traditional notions of female labour, is questionable. When the surface of change is scratched, the supporting structures

are not as solid. Despite the increase in opportunities for women, many of the old battles remain the same particularly through their portrayal in the popular press, as the following quotes demonstrate:

Why men don't iron. Revealed: the scientific evidence that proves the sexes really are different. (The Mail, 22/6/98, p. 47)

The British Boxing Board of Control said one reason for its refusal to licence female boxers was that women were too unstable during menstruation to be allowed to box. (The Guardian, 31/3/99, p. 3)

Revisiting the previous examples, 1997 did welcome more women than ever before into Parliament, however women still only represent 18% of MPs, not enough to dramatically effect parliamentary proceedings. Furthermore, the Prime Minister's top table remains male dominated, with one woman, Margaret McDonagh (General Secretary), in a primarily organisational role. Women only constitute 9% of the House of Lords and 19.5% of European MEPs (EOC, 1999). The first female Cabinet Minister, Margaret Bondfield, was appointed in 1929; the first female Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was in 1979 and Baroness Young was the first leader of the House of Lords in 1981. In general business, of the FTSE top 100 companies, just one has a female head, Marjorie Scardino. Although the number of female executives is rising faster than at any other time, they still only constitute one in six managers and one in 20 boardroom members (Management Salary Survey, 1997). Out of 48,080 people employed in the fire service, women constitute 436 (0.9%)² (HMI, 1998). As the following quote indicates, women's entry into religious positions of authority remains fraught with problems:

Radio 4 nun to quit her holy order over Vatican bullying. ... she came under pressure from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith after writing Woman at the Altar, a book setting out the arguments in support of women priests. (The Times, 12/01/2000, p. 1)

While highly educated and able women have made their mark in society, the changes for women lower down the ranks have been less dramatic and swift. These contradictory images warrant a closer inspection of the 'actual' gains made by women in the labour force in recent years.

¹ Women got the vote, on equal terms with men, in 1928.

² These figures are for the fire services in England and Wales only.

THE SLIDING DOORS OF OPPORTUNITY

Many researchers document the rise in the number of women working (Crompton, 1991; Hakim, 1996; Scott, 1995; Reskin & Padavic, 1995; Walby, 1997). In 1997 women represented 44% of the UK labour market, a 7% increase from 1971 (Labour Market Trends, 1999). Such broad level data tends to hide the micro dynamics occurring within occupations. Analysis at the micro level reveals a slightly different reading of the changes occurring in employment, both at industrial and occupational levels.

Opportunities for work in the late 20th Century have altered dramatically, driven by two key changes in the labour market: growth of the service sector and a rise in part-time and temporary work (Hakim, 1997; Labour Market Trends, 1999). These two changes have had a significant impact on gendered divides within work. In 1998, 81% of all people working part time were women, a 13% increase between 1988 and 1998. Of men in employment, 8% worked part time in 1998 compared to 44% of women.

The service industry includes sectors such as education, health and social work, hotels and restaurants and the retail trade. These particular areas employ 86% of women, compared to 60% of men (Labour Market Trends, 1999). The development of women's work in parallel with the service industries provides insights to the maintenance of specific notions of men and women's capabilities. The predominance of women in 'caring' occupational groups, such as teaching (63%); nursing (87%), clerical and secretarial (74%) and personal services (67%) (Labour Market Trends, 1999), perpetuates specific notions of feminine characteristics.

These gendered characteristics are further supported by the polarisation of positions, which the majority of men hold in management (68%), protective services (87%) and engineering (90%). Images from such industries and professions support dominant constructions of masculine as powerful, rational and strong, a polarity to traditional perceptions of feminine built up through service work. In a similar vein, women's increase in management and the professions is within areas which serve to perpetuate traditional perceptions of women's

capabilities (Adkins, 1996). For instance, within law, women are concentrated in family law and legal aid work; female doctors remain in general practice; female managers are clustered around personnel and marketing (Labour Market Trends, March 1999). Some sectors of the work spectrum also remain on the periphery of experience to the majority of the female population, such as plant and machine operation, skilled engineering (Labour Market Trends, March 1999).

Historically, this polarisation of gendered differences has been further nurtured through the public/private sector divide. The public sector has traditionally provided more structured pathways for women to progress than private organisations (Leach, Stewart & Walsh, 1993). Walby (1997) estimated that women constituted just 39.2% of private sector workers, compared to 60.8% of those in the public domain. Traditionally the public sector has been a more stable environment in which women can make greater progress up the hierarchy. This is partially because public organisations have a responsibility to be far more open about their procedures and face stricter scrutiny of their recruitment practices, and secondly because public sector work ties in with the 'caring' and service ethos associated with women, e.g. nursing, teaching and social work.

The last decade, however, has seen local authority elements³ of the public sector stripped of its financial security by central government, with the introduction of CCT (Leach, Stewart & Walsh, 1994) and more recently, Best Value. These financial surveillance mechanisms introduce competition and accountability to local government (Kerley, 1994). Simultaneously the aim is to encourage the general public to become customers of these services in ever more competitive environments. Service standards are integral to the success of service organisations over and beyond solely producing goods and the quality of service is a deciding factor of competition (Adkins, 1996). The introduction of capitalist pressures to the public provision of services raise questions about the construction of gendered hierarchies, in particular whether similar patterns will emerge as within private business, whereby obsession with short term financial objectives overcomes long term planning.

³ CCT and Best Value do not effect education or the core service of hospitals.

The continual threat of recessions and the development of a consumer driven society has forced private industries to re-structure around a pivot of customer satisfaction and high service standards. Organisations previously providing services through intermediaries are being forced to provide direct customer services as a result of greater competition, higher customer expectations and greater demand for cost efficiencies (Leach, Stewart & Walsh, 1994). Commercial organisations are therefore ever more competitive in an environment which traditionally has favoured men. Within the service sector the increase in competition is forcing organisations to continually focus on cutting overheads and in an industry where staffing costs constitute the greatest part of budgets, employee expenditure is continually the focus in any financial control exercise (Leach, Stewart & Walsh, 1994). The rise in part-time, casual and temporary contracts reflects a strategy of labour control in the current economic climate.

The adoption of a more 'flexible' approach to staff management is a strategy now common to both public and private service sector organisations. The expansion of service work, coupled with the growth in part-time work has resulted in the widening of opportunities for women to enter the work force. In a time when the financial objectives of public and private sector organisations are converging, questions arise over the implications of such re-organisations for the construction of working gender power relations and the dynamics of masculinity and femininity.

To analyse these dynamics, the best case studies would be in an industry which straddles both the public and private divides. Furthermore, a prime site for the analysis of change in gender power relations would be an industry that had a traditionally male heritage. An appropriate environment, which matches both these criteria, is that of sport. Although to the majority sport is a leisure activity, it doubles as a workplace. To examine gender relations within this context it is necessary to understand the unique nature of the wider spectrum of sport culture. Sport is a potent aspect of culture because of the way it permeates society at all levels and all ages. A greater examination of the suitability of the sporting context is now presented.

A SPORTING CHANCE?

"The fact of biological difference is incontrovertible, but it is an 'inert' fact, socially speaking ... there are many factual differences facing us in the social world, some people are short, others tall, some fat, some thin, some have black skins, some white... the analytic socio-cultural task is not to measure these differences precisely and explain them physically, but to ask why some differences, and not others, are taken as so important, become so exaggerated, are used to buttress social attitudes or prejudice." (Willis, 1977, p. 120)

Sport is uniquely positioned within popular culture, touching millions of people daily. In the last 10 years the sporting stage has grown world-wide. The passion for sport transcends political, cultural and social boundaries, as professional sporting spectacles around the world, like the Olympics, World Athletic Championships and World Cups demonstrate. France 98, the 16th World Cup, captured a cumulative audience of approximately 37 billion over the course of the tournament (The Economist, 1998).

"France 98, good or bad, will demonstrate yet again that sport has a power, rivalled only by war itself, to arouse not just the individual, but also the nation" (The Economist, June 1998, p. 6)

Such an event captures the imagination of people across the world and becomes an inspiring vehicle for promoting the relationship between sport and business. The finances behind these events provide insights to the ability of key sports personnel to access political and economic resources in Britain today. For instance The Football World Cup rights between 1990-1998 were purchased by the European Broadcasting Union for \$344 million, while the next three world cup rights for outside the US have been sold for \$2.2 billion (The Economist, 1998). The English Rugby Union sold the rights to televise games from 1997/8 to 2001/2 to BSkyB for £87.5 million (The Economist, 1998). For the 1996 Olympic Games⁴, NBC paid US\$456 million for the rights to broadcast the Atlanta Games.

Within the UK the power of sport enjoys a far reaching impact through sporting spectacles such as the Premier League, Wimbledon, PGA Open and Formula One attracting audiences in their millions. Broadly speaking, these sports and their audiences reflect the heritage of

⁴ The following figures give an insight to the male dominance still prevalent at the Olympic Games:
London (1908) - 36 women competitors, 5 women's sports
Mexico (1968) - 6 women's sports

sport as a male institution, not only in the numerical dominance of men involved, but also in the norms which are cultivated, naturalised and dispersed both on the field and in organisational hierarchies (Bryson, 1990; Connell, 1995; Dewar, 1991; Hall, 1993; Messner, 1990; Whitson, 1994; Willis, 1977). For example, in the last ten years the BBC sports personality of the year has been awarded to 9 men and 1 woman; the Ryder Cup and Davis Cup are both well documented in the media but who can name the female alternatives? The dominance of a masculine ethic running through these sports is further supported by the constitution of sport committees at government level, national sporting organisational level and the sport media⁵ (Hargreaves, 1994).

Historically, women's participation occurred within sporting areas which restricted them from competing on direct terms with men. Achievement in sport for men has always traditionally strengthened their male identity while for women it has raised challenges to their feminine identity. Physical success directly represents a form of masculinity characterised by strength, power and large muscles (Connell, 1987; Willis, 1977). Women are polarised in this transaction, whereby to succeed they must retain an essence of femininity which includes beauty, elegance, toned muscles and grace. This can be seen in the media through the popular athletes like Anna Kournikova, Martina Hingis, and Denise Lewis. Successful female football and rugby players are not so easy to name, reflecting their virtual invisibility in the popular press. Dominant sporting experiences for women are therefore judged against a norm of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity.

Sport, as an integral aspect of popular culture, is supported by an organisational infrastructure. Sport forms an integral part of the current service sector, proffering jobs across the spectrum from leisure centres, sport shops, factories, customer service, professional playing, coaching, teaching, physiotherapy, to biomechanical, psychological and physiological assessment centres. Sporting opportunities have developed at the centre of the leisure industries, in parallel with more women challenging work opportunities in participatory sport, employment in sport and broader society. Despite the enormous growth

Atlanta (1996) - 26 sports, 97 events open to women; 163 events open to men.

⁵ It should be noted that in the last couple of years there has been a steady increase in the number of women

of sport both commercially and in people's leisure lives over the last 30 years, there continues to be limited knowledge on the dynamics of employment. Coaching and national governing bodies form the centre of attention for researchers. Yet the growth of the service sector and the flourishing position of sport related organisations within this, raises many questions about the gendering of work opportunities. Sporting practices discipline and control the body in socially preferred ways, perpetuating patterns of male advantage and female subordination, yet the impact of these customs on gender power relations in sport employment remain unexplored.

It is unknown whether power relations which favour men in both the sporting environment and business world will consolidate male advantage in the sport workplace or whether relations will be re-constructed around women as ideologically more suited to this work environment. A further unknown is how the dynamics of public and private sector philosophies will further impact on gender power relations. The inter-relationships among these factors offer insights to the construction of gender power relations in sport employment.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Growth of the complex of sporting businesses within the 'female' service sector complicates the traditional development of gendered power relations. The progress of such relations is further blurred through the merging of the operating philosophy driving both the public and private sectors. Within these conditions of change, the identification of factors driving gendered power relations have implications for the future arrangement of work and underpinning ideologies of gender. It is the unravelling of these dynamics which forms the focus of this thesis.

As sites of contradictory capitalist versus patriarchal pressures, grounded in beliefs of physical capability, sport organisations provide uncharted territory for the analysis of gender power relations. This research explores the ways in which, within public and private sport

organisations, the gendered dynamics of sport employment are constructed, reproduced and/or transformed.

The research question is as follows:

To what extent are gendered power relations reproduced or transformed through working practices in sport organisations?

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

This project draws its insights from data collected within two sport-related organisations. One a public leisure centre and the second a private manufacturer of sports equipment and clothing. Both organisations are located in the North of England. The research is qualitative in nature and utilises case studies as the research strategy. Through triangulation of interviews, questionnaires and observations, the research will analyse how the organisational structures and working practices transform, or reproduce, particular gender arrangements.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research contributes to both work and organisational literature as well as sport sociology literature. This study provides the opportunity to analyse two organisations within an emerging sector of the marketplace, which continues to be sheltered from mainstream research considerations. Sport possesses immense power as an agent of social change (Connell, 1995; Whitson, 1992). Sport's internal mechanisms of gender relations, influenced by a tradition of male heritage, are under pressure from the fast growth of the industry and the influx of women to the work force. This research project provides the opportunity to establish how broader issues of change are impacting on localised gender power relations. Men's and women's positions across a spectrum of jobs, from management to shopfloor, are analysed to increase our understanding of the inter-play of gender, sexuality and the body in the transformation or reproduction of gender power relations. In addition, the research will tease out the ways in which sport proffers a unique site for the deployment of gender power relations through the body.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Initially, in the next chapter, an analysis of the labour market locates the societal context of employment patterns. This provides insights to the major changes in the labour market over the last 30 years, namely the expansion of the service industries, increase in the number of women in paid work, growth of temporary/casual work and the development of a knowledge based society. The third chapter places these within the context of sport and examines how, as a social institution and social controller, sport offers a unique environment for the analysis of gender power relations. The role of the body within sport and consequently in the naturalising of gender relations are unravelled. The chapter closes by highlighting the lack of knowledge about the dynamics of sport organisations. Consequently, the next chapter explores organisational literature, in particular feminist research, offering up a theoretical framework developed by Acker (1990, 1992).

The fifth chapter lays out the methodological framework of the study, while chapter six is devoted to a reflection of the research process. The reflexive discussion provides an intimate journey through the whole research process up to the withdrawal from both case study organisations. The seventh chapter provides the context for both case studies, which is developed in the next two chapters. Chapters eight and nine examine the gender dynamics across the two organisations, Past Times and Sporting Goods.

The tenth and final chapter begins by comparing and contrasting the identities which emerge from both organisations. This provides a platform for a broader discussion of the findings at a societal level and raises critical questions for research strategies on gender power relations.

CHAPTER II

EMERGING LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

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"Work is a living and active area of human involvement - it makes, and is made, by us. It affects the general social nature of our lives in the most profound ways" (Willis, 1978, p.186).

The future of work - the only certainty is uncertainty (The Guardian, April 28, 1999, p. 17)

INTRODUCTION

Post-war economic growth was badly affected by the oil crisis in the 1970s. The crisis effectively accelerated changes that had already begun to take place with respect to all areas of production, cementing the beginning of a shift from an industrial to a post-industrial society. Such changes fall into four main categories: a decline in the manufacturing industries and a corresponding growth in service related industries; the development of a knowledge based society; thirdly the increasing casualisation of labour combined with loss of job security and finally, an expansion in the number of women entering the labour market. Significantly for this study, it also brought about a wholesale restructuring of the economy in order to meet new criteria for economic growth and prosperity. In turn this affected the daily experiences of workers ultimately altering the extent and nature of men and women's involvement in the workplace.

This chapter seeks to tease out changes to the labour market, showing first how they have influenced women's experiences of paid work and secondly, how they have impacted sport-related employment.

TO SERVE THEM ALL MY DAYS: ECONOMIC RE-STRUCTURING IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Today businesses are evolving in dynamic, technological and global markets, where organisations are forced to compete with greater flexibility and efficiency on an international basis (Bradley, 1999). The UK economy is being re-structured by on-going struggles for advantage

among industrial sectors. More specifically, the once dominant tradition of manufacturing is struggling against a fast growing myriad of service-related sectors.

For most of this century, the manufacturing sector was the engine of the economy and an essential component for sustained long term economic growth. Moreover the success of the service sector is perceived to be dependent upon growth in the manufacturing sector. In recent years, however, the growth of the service sector, both in terms of the proportion of employees and percentage of GDP, has occurred at the expense of the manufacturing sector (See Table One).

Table One: Distribution of Workers Across Industries

	All industries	Manufacturing Industries		Production Industries		Service Industries	
	(all of the figures below are thousands)						
June 1986	24,882	4,867	20%	5,375	22%	14,640	58%
June 1996	25,653	4,106	16%	4,334	17%	17,213	67%
January 1999	26,552	4,027	15%	4,241	16%	18,284	69%
Difference 1986 - 1999	+3,133	-840		-1,134		+3,644	

(Taken from Labour Market Trends, March 1999)

The service sector grew dramatically in the 1990s, a period characterised by rises in leisure time, greater consumer spending and immense technological change (Bottero, 1992; Cockburn, 1991; Rees, 1992; Walby, 1997). New ways for producing, distributing and exchanging goods emerged, whereby the quality of the service is as important as the end product. This shift in provision of services makes the characteristics of staff part of the product being sold (Adkins, 1995; Filby, 1992; McDowell, 1997). These changes in the profile of dominant industries have resulted in a replacement in the types and kinds of jobs available. For instance, the net loss of jobs between 1951 and 1995 from 21 million to 19 million, were from the manufacturing and mining industries.

The loss of traditional heavy manual jobs, associated with manufacturing which guaranteed full-time work for life, are eroded by job trajectories offering short, unstable job opportunities. The

profile of these jobs removes the economic security that long-term employment traditionally offered because the vast majority are in the service industries which are built upon seasonal fluctuations in the market. Employers therefore look to use staff on a flexible basis, removing the costs involved in a large full-time body of employees by employing a core staff of full-time staff supported by part-time and casual workers (Adkins, 1995; Walby, 1997).

The shift from a manufacturing base to a service industry structure has resulted in altering the gender make up of the work force. Women have, over the last few decades, increased their share of the UK labour force, representing 46% of all those of working age in employment in Spring 1998, while men's representation had fallen from 69% in 1951 to 54% in 1999 (Labour Market Trends, 1998; Labour Market Trends, 1999).

The concentration of women or men in a particular area effects the development of gender relations and identities. Traditionally manufacturing provided men with an identity which transferred beyond the boundaries of work (strong, physical, tough, hard, represented as masculine) as service work does today for women (caring, communicative, passive, emotional, characteristics perceived as feminine) (Bradley, 1989; Cockburn, 1995; Crompton & Sanderson, 1990; Game & Pringle, 1984; Rees, 1992).

An analysis of different industrial sectors demonstrates the persistent segregation of men and women, for instance only 13% of women work in the manufacturing and construction industry compared to 37% of men (Labour Market Trends, 1999). Specifically, the service industries continue to perpetuate particular notions of women's capabilities through the distribution of women and men in occupations in this sector. The following figures highlight the dominance of women in traditionally gendered areas:

Industry	Women	Men
Health and social work	80%	20%
Education	70%	30%
Hotels, restaurants and retail	60%	40%

(Source: Labour Market Trends, 1999)

This concentration of women in service related industries results in the common place assumption that women are better at inter-personal skills than men (Bottero, 1992; Bradley, 1989; Cockburn, 1985; Crompton & Sanderson, 1990; Devine, 1992, 1995; Game & Pringle, 1984; Rees, 1992). Subsequently such stereotypes serve to homogenise working women's skills and abilities as well as marginalise men displaying suitable characteristics.

The broad division between men and women's work at an industrial level is repeated through occupational divisions. In Spring 1998 just over 50% of men worked in non-manual occupations, compared to over 70% of women (Labour Market Trends, 1999). Fifty three percent of all working women are employed in the following three major occupational groups, compared with only 19% of employed men (Labour Market Trends, 1999):

- ◆ clerical and secretarial 74%
- ◆ personal and protective services 67%; and
- ◆ sales 63%

(Labour Market Trends, 1999).

These kinds of patterns impinge directly on the earning potentials of individuals and the distribution of wealth between, and among, men and women. Connell has argued that "a capitalist economy working through a gender division of labour is, necessarily, a gendered accumulation process" (1990, p. 74). The distribution of earnings provides an insight to the hierarchical levels that women penetrated.

The 1970 Equal Pay Act (in operation from 1975) was believed to enable men and women's pay to be brought into line with each other (Cockburn, 1991; Hakim, 1996; Scott, 1995). The result was not as effective as expected, partly because the amount of segregation across the labour market was far greater than anticipated (Hakim, 1996). The under-pinning assumption had been

that the majority of men and women worked in the same jobs and occupations, while in reality it was very different (Crompton, 1990; Cockburn, 1991; Walby, 1997).

In full-time work, women have made inroads to managerial and professional occupations, now representing 12% of managers and administrators (Labour Market Trends, 1998). Men, however, continue to predominate at 68% (Labour Market Trends, 1998). The International Labour Organisation (ILO) report on women in management showed that women are still restricted from top levels of organisations, whether it is within private, public or political organisations (ILO, 1998). The report stated that women always earn less than their male counterparts. Such an assertion is supported by income data which demonstrates the greatest differential in income is between male and female managers and administrators where men earn £175 more than women on average per week (New Earnings Survey, 1999). The smallest variance in pay is within clerical work, where men, on average, earn £64.30 more per week than women, as shown in Table Two. The difference in men and women's clerical incomes is an example of the resilience of vertical segregation and distinct economic values placed on male and female workers because despite women dominating the sector, their male counterparts continue to earn a higher income.

On a larger scale average annual earnings reflect similar patterns of gendered value. Average gross earnings for full-time employees on adult rates were £20,919 in the year to April 1999. For men the annual earnings total was £23,412, 42% greater than the annual total for women of £16,481 (New Earnings Survey, 1999). Women also lose out in manual occupations where, on average they earn £6,000 less than men per year.

Table Two: Average Gross Weekly Earnings (£), October 1999

	Full-time			Part-time	All
	Manuals	Non-manuals	All		
April 1999	£	£	£	£	£
Men	335	526	442	155	420
Women	222	347	327	128	244
All	315	443	400	132	337
April 1998					
Men	328	508	429	150	408
Women	211	331	310	120	232
All	307	427	386	125	325
Percent increase					
Men	2.1	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.0
Women	5.4	4.9	5.2	6.3	5.3
All	2.6	3.8	3.7	5.7	3.6

Source: New Earnings Survey 1999, ONS (99)360, 14/10/99

The rise in male, non-manual earnings between 1998 and 1999 was twice that of female non-manuals but the change in manual work was roughly the same. There is also less of a difference between women's manual and non-manual earnings which reflects their concentration in lower valued sectors of the workplace.

Women's increase in the public services¹ at lower management/administrator level has been heralded to have risen by 150% in the last few years to 32.4% (Labour Market Trends, 1998; Walby, 1998). With respect to the National Health Service, Ashburner (1993) revealed that men constituted 82% of all managers yet only 21% of employees, a critical exemplar of continued vertical segregation. In the commercial arena this pattern is repeated. Brockbank and Travers (1995) discovered that although women fill 62% of retail positions, they only represent 6.7% of senior managers. Similarly as managers/professionals, men hold 97-8% of top jobs (ILO, 1998).

In summary, the growth reflected in the service sector has led to an overall reduction in the number of full-time jobs available in the manufacturing sector. Historically men filled these jobs, so the increase in service sector jobs that are associated with traditional female abilities has

¹ Women constituted 60.8% of public sector and 39.2% of private sector workers in 1998 (Labour Market Trends).

seen a rise in the number of women working. Segregation, however, continues to pervade the distribution of jobs across both occupations and industries. Women fill those jobs which require caring, inter-personal and serving skills. At the professional and management level of the job market, men continue to fill the upper end of the spectrum although more women are making an impact than previously in employment history. Pay scales reflect these patterns, with men on average earning more than women, both in different and the same jobs. An important factor in gender distribution across the service sector is that, as a result of its' seasonal variability, a wider diversity of working patterns are emerging. The impact these patterns have on the distribution of men and women forms the focus of the next section.

TEMPORAL MUSCLES: PART-TIME, CASUAL AND TEMPORARY WORK PATTERNS

The 1990s has been an era of continual evolvement of information technology which has ushered in a period where knowledge is continually and quickly updated. As a result, intellectual property has become a defining factor in the distribution of economic rewards, contributing to a polarisation in the work force between those in well paid, secure jobs and those in temporary, insecure jobs whose income fluctuates from week to week (Bradley, 1999). Greatest economic value is placed upon those workers at the top end of the scale where greater skills (evaluated through knowledge based work) are rewarded with larger salaries, bonuses and benefits. For example executives at Oracle can expect to earn ten times their salary in bonus payments; Investment Bankers can expect to earn £150,000 by the age of 30, and £1m a year by the time they are 40 years old (The Daily Telegraph, 4/2/96: 25). The polarisation between the 'rich and poor', is not the only dichotomy being nurtured through the structure of pay and opportunities in the 1990s labour market. Part-time versus full-time; skilled versus unskilled; thinking work versus doing work; and secure versus insecure are all divides emerging within contemporary working patterns and all contribute to the perpetuation of a public/private divide between men and women (Reskin & Padavic, 1994).

Characteristic of the flexible firm, where large efficiencies result from the employers reduced overheads, is a core full-time work force supported by seasonal temporal workers (such as health insurance, sick leave, unemployment insurance, workers compensation, social security, pensions or holiday bills) (Atkinson, 1995). Employers do not have to pay added costs such as holiday or sick pay and can reduce the workforce as, and when, is necessary through variability of hours. Responsibility for employment falls directly on to the individual because there is no guarantee of income from week to week from the employer. This type of inconsistent, unstable work opportunity adversely effects the earning potential of workers as well as the loss of collective power to resist such initiatives (Reskin & Padavic, 1994).

"Pay gap widens between rich and poor: for the first time in 10 years, the gulf between the highest and lowest pay is expanding" (The Independent, 16/10/98)

In the service industries, the greatest drain on resources is pay, being up to 60% of expenditure (Leach, Stewart & Walsh, 1994). When cost cutting exercises are therefore undertaken, staffing establishments are invariably the first target. Such an exercise, labelled streamlining by organisations, has resulted in some employees having hours slashed from 39 hours a week to 15 hours². Figures demonstrate that women constitute the largest group of workers in the service industries and dominate part-time/casual work. Such contingencies will therefore directly impact on them.

Temporary, casual or part-time work has been labelled 'contingent' work, and is a reflection of the creative ways in which staff numbers are being managed today (Reskin & Padavic, 1994). Contingent work is characterised by 'zero hour' contracts where the employer decides the hours of work on an ad hoc basis creating job and economic insecurity for the worker (Halford, Witz & Savage, 1998). The impact of such patterns upon the structure of opportunities is that those

² e.g. Gateway in 1995 cut hours from 39 down to 16 for full-time workers; the Burton Group reduced them to 15 hours. Staff were given the 'option' of redundancy, but 'chose' to accept part-time work as opposed to going on the dole (The Independent on Sunday, 28/1/96).

employed full-time experience greater options (such as health care, pension packages, holiday, bonus payments) (Hakim, 1996). Conversely casual/temporary/part-time workers fail to experience similar benefits, not only at an organisational level but also from the State (Walby, 1997).

By reducing the contracted hours for employees, but offering extra hours during peak times, the employer is only liable for contracted hours during down times. Furthermore, part-time and casual workers, depending on the length of shifts, do not always qualify for breaks, over time or bank holidays. British Home Stores, Allied Maples, Kwik Save, Aldi, Netto, Woolworths and B & Q all use 'flexible hours' contracts (The Guardian, 1997). These allow employers to vary working times from week to week, which means employees must be available to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, negating any degree of free time previously associated with part-time work. By reducing the number of full-time jobs, and dividing them up between part-time and casual roles, employers reduce their National Insurance contributions and employee costs. One effect from this is simultaneously to drive up state benefits, since employees earning below £83 a week do not have employer NI contributions and qualify for low pay benefits, such as the working families tax credit³.

New relations emerge between core and periphery work forces, (full-time versus part-time/casual/temporary staff), as they become polarised at opposite ends of the labour market spectrum. Hakim discusses the sharp distinctions occurring between the part-time and full-time work forces:

"as the part-time workforce grows in size it is becoming more differentiated rather than integrated into the mainstream: the peculiarities of a minority sector are becoming more, rather than less extreme. The occupational structure of the part-time workforce is in sharp contrast to that of the full-time workforce" (Hakim, 1998, p. 167-8).

³ This year the Government has introduced legislation which moves towards the equalisation of rights between people employed on a full and part-time basis. This is to cover maternity leave, holidays, sick leave and pensions.

The statistics in Table Three demonstrate that the demand for work in part-time employment has increased dramatically, from 0.8m in 1951 to 5.1m in 1995, which is directly associated with the growth in the service sectors (Hakim, 1996). The distribution of part-time work, however, is not spread evenly across industries, 7% of employees in production work part-time compared to over a third in service work.

The increase of women into the labour market, combined with a rise in part-time work, is reconstituting economic and social relations between men and women, both inside and outside of the work place (Cockburn, 1991; Walby, 1997). Although men's uptake of part-time work has increased by 50% between 1971 and 1997, compared to women, very few men work part-time. In 1997, 44% of women working were employed part-time, compared to 8% of their male counterparts, as demonstrated in table three over the page:

Table Three - Profile of part and full-time work for men and women between 1951 and 1999

	Total in employment '000s	Full-time employment '000s	Part-time employment '000s	% Part-time
All Workers				
1951	22 135	21 304	831	4
1971	23 733	19 828	3 904	16
1991	25 709	19 032	6 677	26
1999	27 281	20 504	6 777	25
Women				
1951	6 826	6 041	784	11
1971	8 701	5 413	3 288	38
1991	11 344	6 210	5 134	45
1999	12 222	6 778	5 444	45
Men				
1951	15 309	15 262	47	< 0.5%
1971	15 032	14 430	602	4
1991	14 365	12 822	1 543	11
1999	15 059	13 726	1 333	9

Source: Table 3, Hakim (1993; 103) *Trends in Full-time and part-time work, Great Britain*. 1999 trends taken from *Labour Market Trends*, March 1999.

The increase in part-time work has been seen as a move to equality at work for men and women (Hakim, 1996). Figures for those working full-time, however, demonstrate that women represent just over half the percent of men working full-time (92% men work full-time, 56% of women) so

women continue to experience segregation at work. Furthermore, as has been demonstrated women remain concentrated in occupations which carry lower social and economic values than sectors dominated by men. The concentration of women in part-time service work therefore has great implications for the constitution of gender relations both at home and work.

Important for this study is the role part-time work plays in the construction of unequal gendered power relations. Part-time work falls mainly within occupations identified as 'women's work', namely clerical, sales/retail and personal services (Labour Market Trends, 1999). The number of women going into part-time work has paralleled the growth in these areas. In 1998, 81% of all people working part-time were women (Labour Market Trends, 1999). The concentration of women working in these jobs serves to perpetuate stereotypical notions of gendered ability. The similarities and differences between these patterns and the more local context of sport form the focus of the next section.

MIRROR IMAGE: SPORT-RELATED WORK AS A REFLECTION OF THE 1990s LABOUR MARKET

The earlier sections outlined the major changes that altered workers' experiences in the labour market over the last 25 years. This section examines the extent of our knowledge on sport work and the ways in which sport related work reflects some of the transformations occurring in the labour market in Britain.

Sport, as an emerging and growing set of industries, does not fall into a pre-determined occupational or industrial category within the General Household Survey or Labour Market Trends. Instead it traverses a myriad of established industrial and occupational groupings. In Labour Market Trends sport and related services are grouped under recreation, as demonstrated in Table Four below. These figures refer to an incredibly broad array of jobs however, from

libraries to bingo halls, cinemas and leisure centres, so can only be interpreted as a general trend. Specific insights to sport industries cannot be deduced.

Table Four: Employment figures for Sport in Great Britain, June 1999
(these categories fall within the Service industries classification)

	Males (000s)		Females (000s)		All
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Recreational, cultural & sporting services	205.4 (34%)	88.6 (14%)	148.1 (24%)	172.2 (28%)	614.4
Sporting & recreational activities*	112.0 (33%)	53.0 (15%)	73.1 (22%)	99.8 (30%)	337.8

(taken from Labour Market Trends, October 1999, p. S29, Table B15, Employees in employment)

**Sporting & recreational activities is a sub-section of Recreational, cultural and sporting services)*

These figures suggest that sport reflects the broader patterns of the 1990s labour market. Specifically that more women work part-time in the recreational and sporting services than men and that men constitute a larger proportion of the full-time workforce. As mentioned, the broad categorisation makes only a very limited interpretation possibly and few comments can be made to specific occupations. The concentration of women in these part-time positions continues to reaffirm their skills in specific areas which will be high turnover jobs (in comparison to full-time positions) (Hakim, 1997).

Recent and reliable data on labour market trends in sport employment do not exist for two main reasons. One because of the way government bodies collate information and secondly, because of a lack of coherence amongst existing regulatory bodies. Sport occupies an unusual position in that it is comprised of a complex mixture of public, private and voluntary bodies, all of which contribute to the provision structure (see Appendix I). Further confusion occurs, in the collation and analysis of employment figures by different organisations, because no standard definitions of sport, recreation and leisure exist. This lack of unity in approach, combined with the importance of the voluntary sector to the development of sport, serves to place the sport industry across the categories governing the collection of statistics. In addition, because sport is a relatively 'new' industry and government statistics rely on models from over twenty years ago, such models cannot account for changes in the sport sector.

The lack of coherence across sporting structures, sports low profile at government level and dependence upon volunteers all suggest that access to information is a major issue. Data is therefore extremely difficult to collate because of the fragmented development and structure of sport in the UK. In terms of this study, these factors have vast implications for both the need for industry specific knowledge and secondly, the kinds of networks governing business. More importantly, it provides clear indications as to the gendered power relations at the top of sports which claim a key position in our popular culture.

Of the figures available, Bramham (1991) discovered that women constituted 5% of sport managers in the UK. This figure does not compare favourably to women across the labour market in management positions, which is at 12% in 1998. More specifically, females in local authority leisure departments in the northern region of England represent 16% of managers and 16% of outdoor activity centre managers, which is higher than the national average (Sports Council, 1992). These could be a reflection of the increased opportunities available to women within the public sector, supported by 66% of sport physiotherapists being women (Sports Council, 1992). Conversely, on sports desks for newspapers, women do not fair so well, representing only 6% of journalists.

Figures such as these demonstrate that women are over-represented in some areas, but under-represented or not represented at all in others. These figures also point to a general trend where women are under-represented in positions at the top of sport and over-represented in subordinate roles, similar to national trends across the labour market. The lack of recent figures in this growth area indicate the urgent need for more data and information on the patterns of employment within sport and also the necessity for explanations of the dynamics uncovered.

CONCLUSION

Work forms the foundations in all our lives, whether we rely on the products of our own labours for survival, or the products of others (Hakim, 1996). Work is therefore integral to establishing social and power relations between men and women and the reproduction or transformation of the gender order depends on the kinds of work men and women under-take. In the latter part of the 20th Century, due to a reduction in the structural constraints on women's freedom, more women have entered the labour market both in full and part-time positions. This has been paralleled by an increase in the size of service industries, which have taken the dominant position from manufacturing. Combined with this has been a decrease in full-time, long term positions and an expansion in short term, temporary and part-time positions which do not offer the security or careers previously experienced. In addition, women continue to be over-represented in the public sector and under represented across private industries.

The concentration of women in part-time positions therefore raises many questions regarding moves towards equality of opportunity and pay. The kind of jobs and occupations individuals work in emit powerful gendered messages about their skills and abilities beyond work and the congregation of women in service/caring/educative jobs perpetuates stereotypical notions of their abilities.

Labour market trends demonstrate that, despite women's increased participation in the workforce, the patterns of segregation remain as resilient and creative as ever with women continuing to dominate traditional female echelons (McDowell, 1997; Walby, 1997). The continued concentration of men and women in different spheres of employment gives rise to, and reinforces, common sense assumptions about the gendered nature of certain jobs and occupations. This is because the connections made within society between these jobs and gender specific skills affect the construction and reproduction of unequal gendered power relations.

Sport, as a growth industry in the nexus of the service sector, reflects broader labour market trends towards casualisation. However, it is difficult to determine whether a causal relationship exists between the casualisation and increase in number of women in the labour market. A lack of detailed data means that currently it is impossible to comment with any degree of security on the macro dynamics operating in the sport sector. Initial figures suggest that men do dominate the senior management.

Cockburn (1991) argues that sectors which are growing quickly afford the greatest opportunities to marginalized groups, such as women. This is because the level of growth creates new opportunities which emerge outside of the usual organisational control mechanisms. One such industry is sport, as such the opportunities for women might be greater in this sector than in others. This is uncharted territory, since the macro level data available is not specific enough to examine the patterns.

In summary, whilst patterns in general terms can be identified, it is impossible to move beyond suggestions and conjecture because of a lack of reliable data. However, the evidence that exists about the labour market in general, and the limited information on sport, raises questions about the current state of gender power relations and the possibilities for change.

This chapter sets out the key issues in the contemporary labour market appertaining to this study. Sport has been identified as an integral part of the booming service nexus of industries, however little is known about the labour dynamics within it. The next chapter examines the broader context of sport as a social practice and the role sport plays in the transformation or reproduction of the gender order.

CHAPTER III

SPORT, BODIES & CONTESTED TERRAIN

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"If you go to your local library and look at the sports books, they will almost certainly be predominantly about men. If you go to a university library, the bulk of the writing in sports history and sociology assumes male standards. Switch on your television to look at sports programmes and it's the same story- you can be 90% sure to see male rather than female performers; or go to a pub and listen to conversations about sports and they will inevitably be conducted by men talking about male competitions. In spite of the fact that more women are participating in more sports than ever before, and in spite of a significant number of feminist interventions into sports theory, much more attention is still given to the role of sports in the lives of men than to the importance of sports to women" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 1)

INTRODUCTION

The last chapter highlighted the key labour market changes significant for this study, particularly the increase in the number of women working, the growth of the service sector and the casualisation of the workforce. Sport, an industry about which little is known of the micro employment dynamics, presents a suitable environment to analyse for two key reasons. One is that it falls within the rapidly developing service sector, and secondly it has a tradition of male dominance. Sport therefore offers the broader context of change and the juxtapositioning of a labour market shift believed to favour women. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the broader cultural context of sport, in particular the ways in which sporting practices legitimate broad patterns of male superiority and female subordination.

Initially an examination of the emergence of male control at an organisational level through sport highlights the various control strategies utilised by elite groups of men since the end of the 19th Century. Within these overarching pattern the marginalisation of all women and some men emerges. To enlighten analysis of these dynamics, attention turns to the role of the body, the very core of sporting activity, within processes of social control. Battles for control over the body can demonstrate the ways in which social relations are constituted. Insights from Foucault (1979) and Connell (1987, 1995) offer a way to examine how masculinity, femininity and heterosexuality inter-play in the constitution of power relations. Of particular interest are the

ways in which male identity is confirmed while female identity is simultaneously challenged. The chapter draws to a conclusion through a reflection upon the ways in which sport sociology literature can inform gender relations in organisations.

POWER RELATIONS IN 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY SPORT

An examination of the development of organised sport since the 19th Century highlights the ways in which control has remained in the hands of an elite ruling group. The mid 19th Century brought far reaching social and economic changes to the UK when both urbanisation and the industrial capitalist economy were growing (Crossett, 1990). It was during this era that modern sport, as we recognise it today, began to emerge. Although in the 19th Century sport was integral to the promotion of class consciousness, it was also central in the construction and legitimisation of gendered difference.

The men involved in the promotion and organisation of sport in the 19th – 20th Centuries ensured that opportunities only existed for men to be masculinised through sporting practices (Crossett, 1990; Kidd, 1987). Central in the development of this masculine model for sport participation were the public schools in the UK which were aligned with Victorian values of gentlemanly conduct, moral training, character building and manliness (Crossett, 1990; Hargreaves, 1994). Sports embodied competition, aggression and power, characteristics which were considered to be wholly exclusive to men (Crossett, 1990; Hargreaves, 1994; Lenskyj, 1986). The boundaries of acceptability for women's participation stretched to croquet, archery and, in the latter years of the 19th Century, tennis. The focus now turns to the strategies underpinning this control of women's sport which reveals who is controlling women's participation and some reasons for this.

Control Strategies: Marginalisation, Subordination and Complicity

The limitation of women's exercise and sporting experiences occurred through a discourse controlled by patriarchal ideologies across a variety of institutions, such as health, education and the state (Hargreaves, 1994; Kirk, 1998). Reproduction remained women's primary role in life, a duty which positioned them as wives and mothers in the home. Characteristics aligned to these roles were those of nurturing, caring and co-operation, characteristics which were not suited to the popularised rigours of the playing field where aggression, violence and strength were required.

The medical fraternity maintained a logic of protection for the fairer sex as the basis for refusing women entry to the hallowed sporting turf (Hargreaves, 1986; Hargreaves, 1994). In the late 19th Century doctors' professional influence expanded quickly. Correspondingly, doctors' moral leadership was called upon to confirm the hegemonic ideals of sexist sporting programmes. Quasi-scientific justifications, relying on a notion of vitality, were popularised in particular the belief that women's reproductive capabilities are irreparably damaged by exercise (Crossett, 1990). Doctors and some physical educators argued that women's strength was limited and must therefore be preserved for reproduction and family care (Crossett, 1990; Kidd, 1987)

Consolidating these beliefs were certain economic and social conditions, whereby clothing norms (i.e. restrictive skirts and corsets) and long hours of work prevented the majority of women entering sporting arenas. A limited number of women were willing to persist, and challenge the boundaries of patriarchal ideology prevailing in sport. As the 20th Century edged closer challenges to the dominant expectations of female participation occurred, both through sport itself and within the growing area of education¹ (Hargreaves, 1994).

¹ The Royal family popularised cycling for women in the UK at the end of the 19th Century.

While some elements of female emancipation were occurring within the confines of education, the key sporting spectacles of the time continued to be dominated by male sports with women's role being as a supporter from the sidelines. Bryson (1983, 1990) believes that sporting events are a ritual element in the celebration of men's sports in the public arena where highly visible skills are valued and linked with maleness. Public demonstrations of male sporting prowess continually strengthen male hegemony and solidarity beyond the sporting field, confirming what Connell (1990) has termed the 'patriarchal dividend'. One particular sporting event, which proliferated these messages in the late 19th and early 20th Century, was the Olympic Games. A case study of which demonstrates the ways in which myths and knowledge were entwined to present 'logical' and 'common sense' explanations for the marginalisation of women from the organisation.

A Case Study of Control Strategies: The IOC

The development of the Olympic Movement provides insights to the ways in which institutionalised sexism in sport achieved legitimacy. Each time challenges were mounted by particular groups of women to the Olympic movement, various strategies were deployed by the Olympic Committee to keep men and women's participation as completely separate entities (Leder, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994). These strategies of marginalisation, accommodation, trivialisation or externalisation ensured men maintained both ideological and numerical authority of the Olympic Games. Demonstration of the power of the IOC emerges from the detail that the completely white, male ruling elite remained in place until as recently as 1981, when the first female was elected to the IOC. The ways in which women's participation in Olympic sports have been controlled since the inception of the modern games demonstrate the ways in which women have been, and continue to be, marginalised from key decision making positions through the dynamics of social exclusion (Hargreaves, 1994).

In the first few games women's involvement remained confined to stereotypical feminine sports, such as lawn tennis, figure skating and archery. A direct challenge to the male dominated Olympic movement came from Alice Milliat (Hargreaves, 1994). She challenged the IOC rule preventing women's involvement in athletics. Her challenge, requesting that women's athletics be included in the 1920 games, was rebuffed by a demand for the removal of all women's sport by de Coubertin. His demand was over-ruled by the male Committee, who voted for the inclusion of tennis and swimming.

In response a group of European and American women founded a sport organisation (Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationalise (FSFI)) dedicated to arranging women's world games which ran from 1921 to 1934. By setting up their own organisation and running their own international meets and alternative Olympics, these women made a clear statement of purpose. The subsequent success of their events pre-empted the growth of women's athletics across the Commonwealth and North America (Hargreaves, 1994). Their autonomy was not absolute however, and the male dominated Olympic Movement stamped their authority upon these games by legally forcing the removal of the name 'Olympics' from these games, they were thereafter called the Women's World Games.

The autonomy of the Women's World Games was surrendered in the mid 1920s to the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), for which the bait was acceptance at the Olympic Games. The IOC as a way to maintain exclusive control over the games had a rule which stated for a new sport to be considered for inclusion in the Olympic programme there must be both an international federation and a range of international competitions (Hargreaves, 1994). Although the FSFI had gained world-wide attention, it was not until the IAAF (the male equivalent), agreed to take over control of women's athletics that their existence was acknowledged and they could be incorporated into the Olympics.

At this point it took the combination of the male scientific community, colluding with the IOC, to continue the segregation of women's participation. By using scientific 'evidence' of women's biological weakness, women's involvement was marginalised by the limitation in the number of events they were allowed to participate in (Leder, 1996). In the 1920s, the range of female athletic events recognised was only five, in comparison to the 11 events on the World Games schedule. This 'acceptance' occurred the year after de Coubertin retired but remained controversial, with British athletes boycotting the 1928 Games because of the reduced number of events. Controversy has continued to circulate around the 'appropriate' events for women up to the present day, with men participating in 163 events, women 97 at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Women were only allowed to run the marathon and 3000m for the first time in 1984 and were re-admitted to the 800m in 1960 after a 32 year absence (BOA, 1997). The trail of rejection, separation and assimilation continues to reflect women's experiences within sport both competitively and administratively in the 1990s.

This case study of the Olympics illustrates how the history of sport development for both men and women has involved reproduction and limited transformation, any changes occurring within tightly controlled boundaries. Exactly how unequal gender power relations are reproduced so successfully both within sport and wider society are the subject of great discussions. The ways in which control within UK sport reflect the patterns of history, in particular marginalisation and subordination is examined below.

Organisation, Women and Sport

Research in both the UK and Canada in the 1980s and 1990s demonstrates the prevalence of women in administrative positions where the decision making remains dominated by men (Beamish, 1985; Hall, Cullen & Slack, 1989; Hargreaves, 1994; Pitter, 1990; White & Brackenridge, 1985; Whitson & Macintosh, 1989). Hargreaves (1994) argues that the general trend across sport is that men hold key positions of responsibility and decision making while

women dominate in supportive roles. This pattern is no different to that unearthed by White and Brackenridge (1985) in their comprehensive study of the gender distribution across British sport organisations between 1960 and 1985. Again, women were absent from key decision making positions, a pattern reflected in many other countries at the time (Bryson, 1987; Hall, Cullen & Slack, 1989; Macintosh & Beamish, 1987; Whitson & Macintosh, 1989).

Recent data for employment in sport related organisations are scarce, but the information available reflects similar patterns. In 1992 the Sports Council employed 650 people, with no women at director level (Hargreaves, 1994). In 1995, women occupied 4.9% of Chief Executive positions in the public sector and 6.9% of Chief Officer positions (Local Government Management Board, 1995). Women are making small inroads to local authority leisure services, with just 5% of these positions filled by women and men dominate client manager posts (80%) (Aitchson, 1997; Local Government Management Board, 1995). Aitchson (1997) identified that there has been no detailed research of gender relations in public sport and leisure since CCT was introduced in 1988.

Evidence of women's inability to influence decision making at any senior level is also found at a government level. The appointment of the first female Sports Minister (who does not sit on the cabinet) broke with tradition in July of this year. Governing bodies of women's sports fail to obtain the same level of publicity, funding and capital assets as men's sports, a reflection of their continued marginalisation. From the era of modern sports to present day, the control of sport has remained in the hands of a small elite group of men. Over the last century and a half, women have adopted various strategies to gain recognition within the organisational structures of sport. These have ranged from setting up separate sporting bodies to becoming assimilated within larger, male dominated organisations.

Men involved in the development of modern sport ensured the continuation of a monopoly where, if women's involvement does occur their achievements are minimised through processes of marginalisation, taking direct control, redefinition or trivialisation (Bryson, 1983, 1990). These processes do not operate within sport in isolation. Unequal gender power relations within and across sport continue to gain both legitimacy and strength from the relationships sporting institutions share with other institutions, particularly education, health, state and the media (Hargreaves, 1994; Lenskyj, 1986).

In sport the late 1980s and 1990s have been characterised by a growing interest in the role of the body in the deployment of power, disciplinary practices and domination specifically with regard to gender and sexuality (Birrell & Theberge, 1989; Cole, 1994; Lenskyj, 1986; Rail, 1995; Theberge, 1991). Integral to the development of this work has been Foucault's (1977, 1979) conceptualisation of power in which both knowledge and the body are central. The operation of power through the body takes on even more significance in our consumer culture where the body and exercise have become a new way through which gender relations are managed (Cole, 1994). The focus on the body in sport is unique when considering other working environments. Sport organisations therefore provide unique settings for the examination of the ways in which power relations are constituted. The ways in which gender relations are managed through the sporting body and how this understanding may transfer to work situations is the focus of the following section.

THE SPORTING BODY

"The body is directly involved in a political field; power relations have an intimate hold upon it: they invest it, train it, and torture it, force it to carry out its tasks, to perform ceremonies and emit signs" (Foucault, 1979, p. 25-26).

Within both sport sociology literature and wider sociological research, the importance of the body to issues of social control has regained the centre stage in the 1980s and 1990s (Harvey & Sparks, 1995; Loy, Andrews & Rinehart, 1993; Rail & Harvey, 1995; Theberge, 1991; Turner,

1991). Hargreaves (1987) argues that it is in the battle for control of the body that social relations are constituted. The rise in the struggle over control of the body reflects broader changes in society where the collapse in industrial capitalism has displaced work based discipline as a dominant way of controlling society (Hargreaves, 1987). In contemporary consumer society control over the presentation, treatment and operation of the body is a universally important part of the social order (Andrews, 1993; Cole, 1993; Loy, Andrews & Rinehart, 1993; Rail, 1995; Rail & Harvey, 1995). As a symbol of society the body exemplifies and upholds social relations and ties the individual into broader society (Connell, 1995; Featherstone, 1991; Hargreaves, 1987). Sport, as a fertile field for the legitimation and perpetuation of male power, is significant site of continual battles for control over the body. It is through these conflicts that gender power relations are constituted, challenged and recreated.

Control over the body is particularly evident in today's consumer culture, where personal satisfaction and desire are of the utmost importance (Featherstone, 1983).

Quick Fix! Instant Ways to a Beach Body (Health & Fitness, August 1999)

Move It and Lose It: There's a new way to lose weight, and you can eat (almost) anything you want. (Sports and Fitness, January/February, 2000)

The place of sport, in the middle of consumer society, actively involved in the reproduction and perpetuation of fascination of the body, is critical for the construction of particular networks of knowledge and power, to which I now turn.

Consumption of the Body

Consumer culture, represented through a plethora of health clubs, beauty parlours, fashion magazines, marketing, advertising, entertainment and reconstructive surgery, contributes to a programme through which individuals physically re-construct their bodies to conform to societal standards of gendered expectations (Cole, 1993, 1994). In this way, modern society structures

desire and choice so that individuals are caught in a cycle of disciplinary practices (Foucault, 1979; Featherstone, 1991; Turner, 1984).

Turner (1984) claims the power of consumer culture is through its ability to harness people's fascination with body shape for profit, "the commodified body has become the focus of a keep-fit industry, backed up by fibre diets, leisure centres, slimming manuals and outdoor sports. Capitalism has commodified hedonism" (1984, p. 112). In this way, the body becomes a way of disciplining individuals by culturally and temporally specific power-knowledge combinations. These strategies (or techniques) produce compliant but productive bodies (Loy, Andrews & Rinehart, 1993). In this way Foucault's research is used to locate sport practices as one element of societal disciplinary practices through the conflation of social regulation and knowledge (Kirk, 1998).

Within sport the body takes on increased significance for structuring social relations because not only does it automatically confirm male identity for all men, both within and outside sport, but it simultaneously constructs female identity as a polar opposite (Bryson, 1990). The potency of the body as a tool of production is unique to sport because, as Hargreaves outlines, the primary focus of every activity is the body:

"the primary focus of attention in sport overall, is the body and its attributes - strength, skill, endurance, speed, grace, style, shape, general appearance and so on, are tested and displayed. Judgement, motivation and aesthetic awareness are integral to physical performance of course; but it is the body that constitutes the most striking symbol, as well as constituting the material core of sporting activity" (1987, p. 141)

Hargreaves identifies one of the key links between consumer and sporting culture as a common concern with the accommodation of the body in the constitution of 'normal' behaviour. For consumer culture in the late 1990s and early 2000, the body is the focus, the maintenance of which is expected to lead to longer life expectancy, health, fitness and sexual attractiveness. Participation in sport contributes, ideologically, to the proliferation of gendered fit and healthy

bodies as the norm within which strict visible criteria police the boundaries of maleness and femaleness (Cole, 1994).

Foucault's research allows critical questions to be raised about the implications of the reproduction of embodiment through sport (Cole, 1993; Rail, 1995). Hargreaves (1987) describes that sports are "uniquely endowed with the capacity for deploying the body in such a way as to represent and reproduce social relations in a preferred way" (p. 142). Sport is therefore unique in the deployment of power within contemporary society because "the assertion of particular structures of knowledge results in the creation and policing of sexual identities and desires, through which sexual (*and sporting*) bodies are effectively self-disciplined" (Andrews, 1993; 158). Foucault's concept of discipline² has had the greatest impact upon sport sociology (Cole, 1993, 1994; Rail, 1995). Disciplines, as developed by Hargreaves (1986) in an analysis of physical education, provide particular forms of power which are tools for the domination of bodies. Physical education presents rules, regulation and methods through which normalisation is used to invest in the production of specific disciplined bodies. The distribution of power through daily practices manipulates, subjects and regulates individuals (Cole, 1993).

Sport, from this perspective, is a discipline which "incorporates strategies of control which involve training and coercion of bodies into complying with and hence integrating into a particular hierarchical power structure" (Smart, 1985, p. 85). Questions must therefore be asked about the processes which maintain a particular construction of the male body as the dominant one within the sporting hierarchy at the expense of all women and some men, as well as the reproduction of gendered meaning and subjectivity.

Disciplined Sporting Bodies

Although there are anatomical and biological differences between the sexes it is possible to considerably reshape the body both through physical activity, replacement and reconstructive surgery (Connell, 1993; Loy, Andrews, & Rinehart, 1993). The case of Renee Richards, a transsexual tennis player, demonstrates the possibility for a new corporeality through surgery (Birrell & Cole, 1990) while other research in body building and boxing has shown the potential for extending the boundaries of the human form (Aycock, 1992; Klein, 1992; Schulze, 1990; Wacquant, 1992).

Application of a Foucauldian interpretation identifies sport as a technology which is represented as an ensemble of practices and knowledges that discipline, condition and mark the body (Cole, 1991). Insights from Foucault's work place the body as a site of power where the focus is on 'local and intimate operations of power' rather than institutions. The localised focus occurs because discourse is identified as key in the production and legitimation of power (Theberge, 1991). As a result of these contributions, bodies are perceived as social, always in the making.

One problem of this approach is that the body becomes a featureless landscape onto which practices are inscribed. Connell (1995) argues there cannot be a completely cultural account of the body because 'there is an irreducible bodily dimension in experience and practice: the sweat cannot be excluded' (1995, p. 51). Sweat is a particularly significant example in the construction of the gendered sporting body and the distribution of power because within sport sweat signifies maleness as the opposite of femaleness. In direct contrast to masculinity, femininity is marked by an absence of sweat. This physiological marking of difference on bodies is just one way through which masculinity is constructed as the opposite of femininity.

² These are not dissimilar to Turner's 'body practices', individual and collective, which includes a range of ways in which social labour addresses the body.

While the institutional context of sport embeds particular social relations - competition, hierarchy, and the marginalisation of women, these social relations are 'realised and symbolised in the bodily performances' (Connell, 1995, p. 54). Simultaneously, without the institutional structures of sport, activities such as running, tackling, jumping, passing or hitting would not constitute sport. In Connell's words, 'the performance is symbolic and kinetic, social and bodily, at one and the same time, *and these aspects depend on each other*' (1995, p. 54)(original emphasis). Through sport bodily interaction and bodily experience via socially constructed body shape provides a circuit of gendered norms. The next section is concerned with how ways of being known as male achieve a dominant position through sport.

MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY

Through participation, sport becomes a conduit for individuals to learn how the gendered body is constructed as an indicator of success (Connell, 1987). Success is measured in gendered terms, with muscles and power confirming male masculinity, while women sporting similar physiques experience conflict. For instance, the popular press resonates with images, words, and emotions on sport which highlight biological differences and reinforce gender differences in society (Carlisle-Duncan, 1993; MacNeill, 1990). Sally Gunnell upon her retirement was pictured with her husband and couched in vocabulary reflecting her search for the future, which would 'inevitably' involve children. Upon the birth of her first child Gunnell was very quickly pictured with her new child and offering advice for all other new mothers (The Daily Telegraph, 1997; The Guardian, 1997). Alternatively on Roger Black's retirement, occurring as his ability is overshadowed by younger athletes, the media focused on his pending career in television and radio. Through Gunnell, calling on nature was a powerful way to reaffirm women's rightful place in the world and alternatively, the opportunities for Black to earn money similarly support traditional notions of men as breadwinner.

Under-pinning these reports are commonly shared understandings of masculine and feminine, few eyebrows would have been raised by people over these stories. Sport is a crucial site for the perpetuation of these apparent natural contrasts and the consolidation of the differences as common sense. Masculine and feminine are constructed and reconstructed through sport through a range of parallel processes. Analytically unravelling these processes provide insights to the ways in which gender power relations are perpetuated and challenged. Muscles, emotions and sexuality are three potent elements of masculinity and femininity because each provide clear gendered dichotomies about the gendered body. The various ways in which these are reproduced in sport is now examined.

Muscles & Masculinity

Sport is now the most common source of male imagery, where a specific dominant version of masculinity flashes across television screens, is blazoned on the front of magazines and throughout sport sections of daily newspapers. Popular images of male athletes, such as Linford Christie, Kieran Bracken, Greg Rudeski, Michael Owen, David Beckham, and David Coulthard legitimise the notion of male muscularity as a natural, as a biological given (Connell, 1995; Whitson, 1990). Critically important in the perception of this 'natural' difference is its embeddedness in a male-female dichotomy where female is represented by a lack of muscles, by grace, elegance and beauty (Gilroy, 1997). Over-looked in popular cultural portrayals of sport are the different kinds of possibilities which men and women can experience out-side of the dominant experience. The culturally idealised form of masculine character is hegemonic masculinity, a form which, although hegemonic, is not necessarily the most usual form of masculinity for men although it does provide a unifying and global identity for men (Connell, 1995).

Hegemonic masculinity is dependent on the simultaneous construction of the 'other', femininity, as a biologically inferior structure. The inferiorising of 'other' is often implicit, although it can be

explicit, and can be demonstrated through the action of throwing a ball. "Throwing like a girl" is a time old phrase often used to criticise male sporting abilities, but one which speaks to the core of modern gender ideology. Young (1980), in a philosophical consideration of gendered space in sport, stated:

"Many of the observed differences between men and women in the performance of tasks requiring co-ordinated strength, however, are due not so much to brute muscular strength, but to the way each sex uses the body in approaching tasks. ... For many women as they move in sport, a space surrounds them in imagination which we are not free to move beyond; the space available to our movement is a constricted space." (1980, p. 142-143)

Connell (1983) clarifies the ways in which childhood sports teach boys to firstly use their bodies in skilful, force occupying ways, and secondly, provides them knowledge on the extent of their physical capacity. Through participation in sport boys learn how to use their bodies in space occupying ways and to develop force through co-ordination and balance and to transmit the power through their limbs in sporting activity. In contrast, girls traditionally experience sports where force is not encouraged in comparable ways (Duncan, 1995). Within sport, there are typically certain conditions and structures exist which delimit women's experiences and which generally women themselves embody (Duncan, 1995; Young, 1980).

The idea that men do jump higher, longer, faster are taken from the isolation of performance and placed into general statements of categorical gender difference where success is defined by male parameters (Bryson, 1992; Kidd, 1990). Performance related statistics further support systematic inequalities by way of monetary values placed on athletes' success and the greater financial value placed on men's sports by the popular sports media (e.g. Wimbledon, PGA/WPGA). Athletic competitions, rugby internationals, cricket matches all perpetuate an ideology of male superiority and female inferiority through quasi-biological justifications of the social order (Crossett, 1990; Bryson, 1987, 1990). A cohesive and convincing ideology about the nature of men and women's roles in contemporary society is reproduced through gender specific representations of the body.

The achievement of women competing in single sex events continues to be measured against a male value system of success. Specifically female sports, such as synchronised swimming and gymnastics, despite requiring immense skill, power and co-ordination, are never accorded the same level of acknowledgement as those defined male (Bryson, 1990). This inequality is supported by the major institutions in society, in particular school sports and the media's portrayal of male and female athletes. The maintenance of the myth of a blanket male superiority and female inferiority occurs simultaneously through psychological processes. These are now explored.

Emotions and Masculinity

The connection between male sport and aggression has received widespread attention for a long period of time (Dunning, 1979; White & Vagi, 1990) and criticism from feminist researchers (Theberge, 1994). Machismo, misogynist and homophobic behaviour, drunkenness and violence are some of the characteristics documented from football, rugby, cricket and American football players (Donnelly & Young, 1985; Messner & Sabo, 1994). They are also characteristics rarely associated with emotion. In contrast emotion is generally considered to be synonymous with female behaviour, in particular emphasised femininity (Connell, 1995). Willingness to show emotions, to cry and laugh are identified as female and to bear no relation to aggression. For instance when Gascoigne cried in the 1990 World Cup semi-final for being carded³, he hit every headline the next day because this was perceived as an 'unnatural' reaction for a man. Crying and aggression are constructed as the opposite ends of the same continuum. The broken links between these two emotions highlights the way in which difference between men and women is weaved through sport experiences. A recent incident in boxing demonstrates the broken logic governing men and women's participation in sport and the ways in which gender specific attributes are universally applied to men and women. The reason for choosing boxing is

³ This meant he would miss the next game, i.e. the final, if England reached it.

because it is identified as an aggressive sport. The anger at the participation of women arises from particular constructions of emotion and female.

As already discussed young boys learn how to use their body in forceful and space occupying ways from an extremely young age (Connell, 1995; Whitson, 1990). Boxing represents the epitome of a masculinity represented through a violent demonstration of physicality, raw male power and dominance (McDermott, 1996). The outrage, which occurred within the media of a fight in Seattle at the beginning of October between a man and a woman, highlights the strength of our cultural definition of masculine and feminine. Similarly, the denial of a licence to box to Jane Crouch, the women's world welterweight champion, reflected the continued alignment of women with passive, non-violent behaviour and biological inferiority.

One of the reasons provided by the British Boxing Board of Control for this refusal was that female boxers are too unstable during menstruation to be allowed to box (The Guardian, 31/3/98). The direct association of women's emotional instability with menstruation reflects the kind of logic adopted by male promoters of sport at the beginning of the century. Then the discourse focused on the notion of 'vitality', women needed to preserve themselves for reproducing and participating in sport would detrimentally effect the amount of energy they had available. Although theoretically discourse has moved on from this over the last 99 years, the resurgence of such beliefs to protect the male domain demonstrates the fragility of masculinity and the continual negotiation occurring to maintain its hegemonic position. Kidd (1990) also believes horror of women's involvement in the quintessential masculine sport of boxing arises from men's fear for the loss of nurturing. This fascination that women are a homogenous group, all of whom will react in the same way, is part of the power of gendering through sport.

Damage to the male psyche is argued to underlie such male fears, where from play school to the broader playing fields of life sex segregated sports support a 'natural' hierarchy of difference (Kidd, 1990). Women transgressing traditional boundaries threaten male power at a higher level:

"at the deepest psychological levels, the blurring of sex roles undermines not only the male privileging sexual division of labour, but also the very process by which males raised within sexually segregated sport have gained personal validation and confidence" (Kidd, 1990, p. 39)

While being emotional/unemotional are juxtaposed in sport as fundamental female/male differences, the reproduction of conventional representations of femininity and masculinity are reinforced through heterosexist ideology (Gilroy, 1997; Hargreaves, 1994; McDermott, 1997; Messner, 1990; Theberge, 1994). Sexuality is an integral part in the construction of gender in sport and is controlled through a heterosexual matrix. This is examined in the following section.

Heterosexuality

At the women's 1998 world championships, volleyball was renamed 'Tottieball' in an overt attempt to sexualise the female athletes. The intimate connection of sexuality to gendered control whereby explicit standards of the beautiful body are feminised is evident in this particular example. The female body is subjected to a disciplining gaze through a heterosexual lens:

"In a move designed to attract converts ... the organisers of the women's world championship in Japan have demanded 'more flesh' in the hope of seeing off the increasingly popular beach version of the sport. Women, according to the new diktat, must wear shorts only half as long as those won by male competitors; said shorts being 'tight in waist and length, and cut in an upward angle towards the top of the leg'. Five nations were yesterday fined £1800 for ignoring the new regulations while the fashion code suggests women should consider wearing a one-piece swimsuit-style ensemble" (The Daily Telegraph, 7/11/98, p. S5)

The reduction of players' control over clothing indicates that women's sexual images are considered to be more important at this event than their sporting prowess. Another way in which women's sporting participation is controlled through sexuality is by the censorship of women displaying what are labelled masculine characteristics (such as muscles, leanness, power), e.g. Navratilova, Davis and Mauresmo.

At the Australian 1999 Open an hitherto unknown female, Mauresmo, appeared in the singles final having soundly beaten the women's world number one, Lindsay Davenport. Davenport is renowned as one of the biggest hitters upon the women's circuit. For Davenport to be beaten by someone who out hit her was therefore greeted with incredulity by the press. A day before, the women's doubles finals had been won by the 'dream team', Martina Hingis and Anna Kournakova. Hingis and Kournakova are darlings of the media because of their confirmation of emphasised femininity through photographic looks, engaging personalities and small, lithe bodies. Kournakova and Hingis are regularly used as sex symbols in the popular press, in a similar way to Mary Decker Slaney 10 years ago:

"female athletes who exemplify the stereotype of "femininity" are treated explicitly as sporting sex symbols, in celebration of the male/female distinction, like "pretty Miss Mary Decker, who, in this Amazonian world, wears make-up on the track and shaves her legs." (Hargreaves, 1986, p. 117).

While Hingis and Kournakova are heralded as sex symbols⁴, the sexualisation of Mauresmo occurs in a highly differentiated way. Her musculature and powerful playing skills are reinvented within a hierarchy where her sexual identity is considered more important than her achievement of this level of skill. Newspaper headlines in this country documented the game with headlines of⁵: "Muscular lesbian" or "Lesbian beats Davenport". These headlines are used, alongside close-up action pictures, to exemplify her 'unfeminine' shoulders which are muscular and strong. Juxtaposed with these photos is some of the final winner, Hingis. Hingis was not on court at the end of the match, sweating and exhausted; instead she was allowed to wash and change and taken to a local beach to pose for pictures in a little red dress. Meanwhile, Mauresmo is pictured in action at close range, and direct comparisons are drawn with her body to those of men on the tour. She 'hit the ball like a man' was one of many phrases used to confirm her status as a freak, both sexually and within sport.

⁴ As the women's tennis game challenges the male game on levels of excitement and action, attempts at Wimbledon to position the women players in a hierarchy where sexual attraction was more important than sporting ability, emerged through a photo shoot of all the top seeds in evening wear.

The above examples identify the coalescing of male dominated organisational structures (Boxing Federations and the media) in an attempt to control or prevent women's participation in physical activity. MacKinnon (1987) and Gilroy (1997) concur that sexuality and physicality are intimately connected to these processes, not as a well designed plan but as a reaction to a sense of loss of power. Heterosexuality is naturalised through a discourse where men have a 'heterosexual, muscular, space dominating presence and women a passive sexuality and restrained physicality' (Connell, 1995). Connell's conceptualisation of the body emerging through social practice places sexuality within a plane whereby it is 'enacted or conducted' (1987, p. 111). Within sport, where female athletes challenge the sexual norm they are reprimanded by being called, for example, butch, lesbian, lezzos or lesbians, or subjected to sex tests (Gilroy, 1997; Hargreaves, 1994). Another way in which heterosexuality is enforced is through the sexualisation of those athletes conforming to conventional representations of femininity.

Heterosexist ideology is maintained through sporting practices and processes. A norm of heterosexuality is also an integral part of the construction of hegemonic masculinity, as Carrigan, Connell and Lee argue:

"The most important feature of ... masculinity alongside its connection with dominance, is that it is heterosexual" (1987, p. 393)

CONCLUSION

"Each cultural message about sport is a dual one, celebrating the dominant at the same time as inferiorising the "other" (Bryson, 1990, p. 173)

Sport's role in the reinforcement of difference between and among men and women is unparalleled because of its apparent freedom from societal boundaries of control and secondly, because it is perceived as separate from wider society (Dewar, 1993; Hall, 1994; Kidd, 1990; Whitson, 1990). It is a tailor made opportunity for the transformation of ideologies into aspects of concrete reality, to 'planes of common sense' (Willis, 1994, p. 41). 'Factual validity', such as

⁵ The quotes are taken from a combination of the Guardian; The Daily Telegraph, The Times, The Sun and The Daily Mail.

scores, lengths, times, distances; are used as immutable defence of fundamental, unchangeable biological 'natural' differences.

Given the prevalence of sport in popular culture, the legitimisation and reaffirmation of hegemonic masculinity, predicated upon heterosexuality, is unparalleled in the 1990s. The numerical dominance of male sports, societal currency attached to masculine body forms and the naturalisation of difference all merge to provide a common sense understanding of difference between men and women. This is supported on a daily basis by the infra-structure of sporting organisations within which the majority of decision making positions are male dominated. Popular representations of sport through the media consolidate these patterns of privilege, serving to support an ideology of natural male sporting ability.

Participation in sport confirms hegemonic masculinity for all men despite only a minority ever living the embodied ideological model. An integral part of the ongoing production of gender through masculinity and femininity is sexuality. Hegemonic masculinity is predicated upon male/female attraction, hence women and men not conforming to these societal relations experience conflict in sport, as the following indicates:

For men:	athleticism	=	masculinity	=	heterosexuality
For women:	athleticism	?	femininity	?	heterosexuality

(Messner, 1992)

Feminising practices construct women's body as object and restrict women's sport experiences while concurrently providing opportunities for men to experience their body in powerful ways (Whitson, 1994). In an era where physical work has been devalued, knowledge is highly valued, more women are entering the labour market and gaining economic dependence, there is an erosion of traditional sites for male power. Sport, particularly body contact ones, provide an arena in public where toughness and strength are highly valued masculine traits (Whitson, 1994). Popular male sports legitimate and protect this form of masculinity, providing daily examples

through popular culture of male physical excellence (Kidd, 1994; Messner and Sabo, 1990), naturalising a logic of gendered difference.

Sports administration and participation remain contested terrain for men and women. Broad patterns of male superiority and female marginalisation continue, relying upon specific constructions of the body in the constitution of gendered power relations. Sport is growing rapidly, yet the influence of such dynamics on gendered relations within the context of sport work is unknown. The previous two chapters illustrate the tradition of male dominance in sporting hierarchies but female prevalence across work opportunities in service-related organisations. The growth of sport is occurring in the service sectors. The contradiction of patterns in these two areas is clear, what remains confusing is the inter-relationship between men and women in sport industries. The lack of research on work in sport related organisations demands that I look elsewhere for inspiration. Consequently, in the following chapter insights are drawn from organisational research.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANISATIONS, GENDER & SEXUALITY

CHAPTER IV

ORGANISATIONS, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

"Sexual divisions change but survive through a period of economic crisis and technological transformation" (Cockburn, 1985, p. 9)

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter mapped out the relatively unexamined territory of the nature of gender power relations in sport organisations. Consequently there is much potential for research on organisations within the sport sector. Although research in sport sociology provides insights to the nature of the relationships between sport, gender and the body, application of these ideas in the sport organisational context have not occurred. To this end organisational literature provides useful insights to extend current knowledge.

As in most areas of research, original organisational work failed to take into account women (Acker & Van Houten, 1974; Kanter, 1977). The next stage was to add women and stir, an approach which fuelled a move to consider the relational issues in terms of gender of bureaucracy (Ferguson, 1984; MacKinnon, 1979). Finally researchers began to unravel issues of control involved with relations of sexuality and gender (Acker, 1992; Adkins, 1995; Filby, 1992; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1998; McDowell, 1997; Tyler & Hancock, 1998). These later analyses could well provide keen insights into gender power relations in sport organisations.

This chapter sets out the main theoretical issues from the organisational context which informs the present study. Building upon critical analysis of the gendered nature of bureaucracies, research upon sexuality informs a move to consider the intricate ways in which structure and agency interact in the patterning of gender power relations. Theoretical work by Acker (1990, 1992) identifying the embeddedness of gender in organisations provides the framework for this study. The ways in which this approach could aid an analysis of gender power relations within the service sector is discussed in light of work in betting, hotels, financial services, nursing, the

government and banking. The chapter draws to a close by laying out the theoretical foundation for this thesis.

THE GENDER OF BUREAUCRACY

The rapid growth in the late 1970s and 1980s in research on women and work, management and organisations provided a foundation for the critique of mainstream organisational theory (Acker, 1990, 1992; Acker & Van Houten, 1974; Adler & Izraeli, 1989; Burrell, 1984, 1987; Ferguson, 1984; Hearn & Parkin, 1983, 1987; Hearn, Sheppard, Tancred-Sheriff & Burrell, 1989; Kanter, 1977; MacKinnon, 1979; Mills, 1988). Up to this point gender had not been a consideration in the study of bureaucratic organisations where the focus was upon the creation of efficiency and effectiveness.

Organisational research which contributed to the growing critique of gendered power in organisations and the broader acceptance of such work, emerged from Kanter's (1977, 1979) analysis of men and women in the corporation. Part of the problem blinding Kanter's view of organisations is the invisibility of gender and sexuality because of the traditional understanding of the rational, bureaucratic organisation dominated by the asexual, masculine worker (Oerton, 1996). In such a gender-neutral framework, it was impossible to analyse the ways in which gender or sexuality structured hierarchical relations between men and women within organisations.

Kanter's documentation of the skewed distribution of men and women across organisational levels highlighted a masculine ethic which dominated organisations and the effect this ethic had on the kind of interactions experienced by men and women. The focus of Kanter's work lay on the gender of organisational members and on positional powerlessness within the organisation. This approach allowed Kanter to remain extremely positive about the future of opportunities for women because she identified the fault as lying with organisational locations rather than the gendered characteristics of individuals. By firmly placing power differences at the centre of her

explanation instead of sex or gender differences, Kanter believes that when women are promoted into positions of more power their sex theoretically becomes invisible. This logic suggests that invisibility equates to becoming a part of the prevailing organisational rationality, which we now identify as male. This is confirmed by Kanter's lack of acknowledgement of the relational characteristic of organisational power. Following this reasoning, men are positioned in authority and women as subordinates, a logic Kanter explains away through the preference of power as something men possess, "a preference for men = a preference for power" (1979:).

Ironically it was the critiques of Kanter's work, her failure to challenge what constitutes 'neutral' and the acceptance of male norms that provided the spring-board for the development of research on organisational sociology for women (Tancred-Sheriff & Campbell, 1992). Her work received far wider attention in the male dominated research community because of her reliance on Weber's bureaucratic organisation, through which she accepted a hitherto undeclared masculine rationality. The acceptance of such a framework meant Kanter failed to challenge the gendered sub-text maintaining organisational power relations.

Radical feminists, such as MacKinnon (1979) and Ferguson (1984), provided the most striking challenge to the mainstream debates. Early radical feminist critiques of sexual inequalities in organisations identified bureaucracies as sites of female oppression and male dominance, maintained through male created hierarchies of control (Acker & Van Houten, 1979; Ferguson, 1984; MacKinnon, 1979).

Ferguson (1984) maps out male dominated foundations of bureaucratic organisation which involves both structures and processes. Entwined with this she identifies the traditional alignment of men with public life and in bureaucracies, while women are largely restricted to the private sphere. Combined with this public/private dichotomy is the absence of sexuality from the research literature, since the female body, which represented sex, was banished from the formal work place. When women do cross over into the public arena Ferguson claims they are

the subordinate voice trapped within a historical dichotomy of gendered behaviour and expectations.

Ferguson (1984) demonstrates the ways in which women are submerged within bureaucratic discourse and posits radical feminism as an alternative way forward which would be informed by women-centred ways of organising. Both Ferguson and later Acker (1990) identify clearly the ways in which male ways of knowing and being are integrated with the arrangement of bureaucratic ways of organising and that gender is embedded within these patterns of working. Incorporating an understanding of differentiation of workers within a theory of power relations was, for Ferguson, the way forward:

"It is important to remember that concrete existing individuals are temporal beings who have complex social histories and multiple possible futures; real people cannot be collapsed into their organisational identities. That the modern organisation tries to do precisely that, tries to merge the identity of the individual with his or her organisational role, is a problem to be analysed, not a fact of life to be taken for granted." (Ferguson, 1984, p. 37)

What Ferguson identifies here is the importance of history and diversity of experience. She is pointing towards the broader concept of gender relations within which gender is located as an internally complex structure. The organisation is clearly located in a specific social and cultural nexus, where, race, gender and classes are unequal. While Ferguson identifies a strategy for change which is predicated upon an assumption of gendered difference, other feminist researchers were approaching organisational power relations in different ways, albeit less challenging to the status quo. Common to all feminist critiques is the goal of raising the visibility of gender as an integral part of control mechanisms across organisations and explicating the multiple ways in which unequal power relations are constituted.

Radical feminism, because of its critique of the inherently patriarchal society, envisioned a future outside of mainstream society to escape the oppression of women. A similar idea, of looking outside the organisation for other ways in which gender is structured, emerged from feminist work influenced by structuralist Marxism, in particular Mitchell (1971). Her conception

of gender relations as four inter-related structures of women's oppression (production, reproduction, socialisation, sexuality) was ahead of its time but had failed to be considered within mainstream research (Connell, 1987, 1995). Each 'structure', Mitchell argues, generates various forms of oppression, each with unique historical trajectories and political struggles. Inherent to Mitchell's model was the notion of conflict within gender relations (i.e. between her notions of structure), a dynamic which is integral to later conceptions of the structure of gender (Connell, 1987, 1993, 1995). Although Mitchell's conception of gender relations suffered from internal inconsistencies, her focus on sexuality as a structure on its own has proved fundamental to unravelling gender power relations (Connell & Dowsett, 1993). The ways in which consideration of the physical aspects of individuals developed ways of thinking about gender relations are now examined.

GETTING PHYSICAL AT WORK

By encapsulating sexuality within the unconscious mind, Mitchell maintained the split between home/work, men/women, patriarchy/capitalism which was popular at the time. This also supported mainstream organisational research where the ideal organisation was predicated upon control within which the personal was invisible (Oerton, 1996). MacKinnon (1979) and McNally (1979) breached this divide between sexuality and the personal in the domain of public work by placing the individual as a thinking, knowing, gendered being in the structure of organisations. McNally's contribution was a call for greater attention to be paid to the dynamics of sexuality in the broader concept of gender relations. MacKinnon's work made a greater contribution to the future development of analyses of sexuality by demonstrating that sexual exploitation forms an integral part of women's lives. MacKinnon perceived sexuality within the workplace to be implicitly included through practices such as recruitment strategies and job descriptions.

Rich (1979), within a tradition of radical feminism, identified heterosexuality as an unavoidable dynamic in gendered relations. Rich coined the term compulsive heterosexuality (CH) to

encapsulate what she believed were one-way dynamics of sexual relations between a man and a woman. CH was a concept originally developed by Barry (1977) within the context of female slavery where women were both exploited and entrapped by men. Extending beyond this use of the concept of CH, Rich argues that pervasive forms of sexual violence are linked to the enforcement of heterosexuality on women, which is maintained through 'subliminal enforcement'. This occurs through three key dynamics; the ideology of heterosexual relationships, the dismissal of homosexuality (specifically lesbian existence) and the dissemination of pornography. Rich therefore sees heterosexuality as compulsive, demonstrated through the need for it "to be imposed, managed, organised, propagandised and maintained by force" (1979: 191). Sexuality was not, therefore, a separate dynamic occurring only outside the realm of the organisation.

One specific dynamic of CH is sexual harassment. MacKinnon (1979) conceptualised sexual harassment as the tool which subjected women to men's sexualised control. This embeddedness of gender and the unequal power relations is a concept which is integral to Acker's (1990, 1992) research on the nature of organisational gendered power relations. MacKinnon (1979), Pringle (1989) and work spearheaded by Hearn and Parkin¹ (1987) discusses sexual harassment in terms of men versus women. In other words it operated on an assumption of heterosexuality within a dynamic which subordinated women to men. Central to the theoretical development of a framework of sexuality as a set of power relations was Rich's removal of sexuality from being natural to being both social and integral to the construction and maintenance of gender inequalities. While important in clarifying the diversity of forms through which heterosexuality emerges, Rich's work over-emphasises the inevitability of heterosexuality as a social structure.

The application of Rich's analysis into broader gender inequalities across organisations raises critical questions about the interaction of individuals with each other and organisational

structures. For instance, the ways in which compulsive heterosexuality translates to male control of women's labour requires examination. The consideration of these issues emerged within broader organisational research, which is now considered.

SEXUALISED RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH DISCOURSE

The possibility that power mediated by sexuality is male and confers advantages on men within organisations received much broader academic recognition from the mid to late 1980s, most notably through the work of Burrell (1989), Cockburn (1985), Hearn & Parkin (1987, 1989), Mills (1989), Pringle (1989) and later by Adkins (1992, 1995), Cockburn (1991), Filby, (1992) and Witz, Halford & Savage (1998). Pringle's (1989) work broke away from positioning power within structural elements of organisations and located it within the discourse of sexualised relationships between the boss and secretary.

Pringle (1989) demonstrates the structuring of patriarchal relations through specific organisational positions and the ways in which sexual relations are integral to the construction of organisational power. She discovered that sexual or familial discourse was integral to the maintenance of specific sets of power relationships between these individuals. This discourse always draws upon heterosexually based relationships outside the work place (e.g. mother son; father daughter; wife husband). The restrictions operating within these power relations were that secretaries could only claim authority based on their subject position and that the conditions resulted in women always retaining a subordinate status. In contrast (male) bosses did not rely on their subject position for authority but could also draw on organisational resources for control, so reflecting a male rationality weaved through workplace processes and practices. As a result, within the discourse of the masculine rational organisation, men's sexuality remains hidden but dominant.

¹ For instance Gutek (1989); Sheppard (1989)

Pringle (1989) continued in the vein of earlier feminists by both bringing the 'private' into the public domain of organisations and making connections between workplace identities and the construction of gendered power relations. She widened the theoretical possibilities available through previous conceptualisations of heterosexuality to allow for resistance and negotiation by individuals. There are, however, two main drawbacks to her research. The first is she identifies sexuality as a site of oppression and resistance for women through her conception of coercive and non-coercive heterosexuality. These two concepts, falling within a male dominated sexuality, are presented as unconnected when they have to be part of the larger dynamic of gender relations (Adkins, 1995; Witz & Savage, 1996). The second problem is that Pringle accepts the location of men and women in gendered positions, from which she generates a theoretical analysis of sexuality. The way in which these individuals become gendered in the first place is over-looked. Consequently the links between gender and sexuality remain difficult to ascertain.

Pringle's (1989) work is extremely valuable in extending conceptualisations of sexuality in organisations. Hearn & Parkin (1983; 1987; 1989) further broaden the dynamics out, demonstrating the ways in which sexuality is socially constructed in the workplace and how, simultaneously, sexuality shapes organisational power dynamics between men and women. For the first time, sexuality was defined broadly, beyond sexual motivations of fantasy and desire. This provided more space within analysis to consider the interactions between the organisation and individuals in the constitution of power relations (Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Mills, 1989; Sheppard, 1989, 1992; Tancred, 1989, 1992). In this body of research, sexuality was construed as socially constructed and inclusive of:

- sexual relations and the ensuing implications for sexual harassment policy;
- sexuality as a network of power relations and its influence over organisational practices and processes, training and promotion opportunities and related social relations;
- sexuality was perceived to effect both men and women, it was no longer seen only as a defining characteristic of women (Acker, 1989; Burrell, 1989; Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Sheppard, 1989; Tancred, 1989).

Similar to Pringle's (1989) analysis, Hearn and Parkin (1989) argue that part of women's wider experiences of inequality is related to their position in discourses of sexuality, where they are objects of men's desire. This is constructed around dominant notions of (hetero)sexuality based on gender relations where men's superior position was legitimated through work practices and processes (Acker, 1989). Hearn and Parkin (1989) coin the term 'organisational sexuality' to explain this form of power and begin to demonstrate the embedded nature of sexuality within organisations. This is achieved through their conceptualisation of sexuality as a 'body politics'. Sexuality, for them, exists through interaction, experience and the psyche. Hearn and Parkin (1989) therefore pointed the way forward by identifying the body as integral to these politics of power.

Cockburn (1981, 1985) developed early insights to alternative forms of power within organisations involving physical elements in her research on the printing industry, although she did not at this point, directly talk about the 'body'. Cockburn's research moved beyond previous feminist research which solely focuses on the economic controls operating in the labour market (Braverman, 1974; Beechey, 1978). An important step forward was Cockburn's identification of other forms of patriarchal power besides economic power, which serve men's interests to the detriment of women. Moving towards the links between the various aspects of power away from a preoccupation with structural factors.

Cockburn (1981) attempted to identify interacting components of power, which combined, maintained an overarching patriarchal power. While side-stepping debates of the time around the dynamics of economic power, she concentrated upon two other forms, socio-political and

physical. Her explanation for this approach was that the materiality of power had been absent from previous analyses, thus the physical and socio-political elements must be considered to extend current conceptualisations of gender. These two structures, combined with economic power, serve to confer greater organisational resources on men, and collectively beyond this, throughout society. Critically important in this analysis was the connection between characteristics attributed to men and women and their positions and relations at work.

The key contribution from Cockburn was the evidence she provided to demonstrate that gender is a social practice which 'constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do' (Connell, 1995, p. 71). Cockburn was on the edge of showing how the biological does NOT determine the social through her explication of the various elements of power, specifically physical power. The physical sense of maleness and femaleness (she talks a great deal about maleness) is crucial to cultural interpretations of gender which, in the printing industry, Cockburn clearly demonstrates how this occurs for the men. "While people are working, they are not just producing goods and services for their employer and a pay packet for themselves. They are also producing culture" (Cockburn, 1985, p. 167). In this understanding of culture the individual is tied into the organisational ethos through their day to day activities. By identifying 'physical power' and the reliance on the body in the social practices around this, Cockburn (1981) was touching on the connections between gender, the body and sexuality within gender power relations.

Research on organisations and sexuality clearly highlights the ubiquitous nature of unequal sexualised power relations for men and women. More recently the influx of more women into the workforce and a small number moving through the hierarchy raises new questions about the interactions between individuals, structures and sexual power. This is particularly pertinent in an era dominated by the growth of service related industries which traditionally nurture ideologies of domesticity, through which women and their capabilities are devalued. It is unclear whether new relations of sexuality are being forged as women enter organisations or

whether covert mechanisms of sexual and gendered control are being reinvented around traditional dichotomies.

Organisational research, although explicating the objectification of women through heterosexist discourse, had still failed to identify how this was entwined through both structure and practice. The centrality of gender in organisational debates over the constitution of power relations, had tended to fade under the focus on sexuality. This was the result of disparate feminist research occurring, within various feminist frameworks, none of which had been brought together since Hearn & Parkin's early review (1983). Insights to the relations between sexuality, gender, worker and organisation requires a more robust framework. Acker's (1990, 1992) organisational research provides this opportunity because she roots her examination of gender in a multi-levelled analysis. Acker (1992) developed an approach to organisational analysis, which considered both the sexual and gendered nature of control, a framework to which I now turn.

GENDERED ORGANISATIONS

Pringle (1989) had identified a gender sub-text through her recognition that organisational rationality, far from being gender neutral, is predicated upon a specific masculinity which alienates femininity, subordinated masculinities and sexuality. This elevation of masculinity² in isolation should, however, be theoretically impossible, because masculinity only exists in relation to femininity (Connell, 1987). If bureaucracy is dependent upon a particular form of masculinity, logically there are other masculinities and femininities hidden within the structures and processes. This draws the questions back to an earlier point, which is that a more complex structure of gender is required to be able to generate a better understanding of the ways in which gender relations are reproduced rather than transformed. One way of achieving this is to see gender as an analytical category (Connell, 1987). This is accomplished by Acker (1992), through her theorising about the 'gendering' of organisations.

Gendered analyses of organisation, as discussed earlier, originated from critiques of Weber's bureaucracy and the unacknowledged gender sub-text (Acker, 1990). Acker (1990) demonstrated the ways in which a gendered sub-text exists within organisations by bringing people and their activities back into the conceptualisation of hidden gendered power relations. The under-pinning gendered sub-text, Acker believes, contributes to the maintenance of patterns of gender difference and subjectivity (Acker, 1992). Acker believes that the whole ideology behind organisational structures and practices is based upon a man:

"the man's body, its sexuality, minimal responsibility in procreation and conventional control of emotions that pervades work and work organisations"
(1990, p. 152)

Such characteristics, called maleness by Cockburn (1991), are upheld as the ideal characteristics of the gender neutral, asexual worker. Halford, Savage and Witz (1997) state that this 'gender embodied subtext' results in men being perceived as the most desirable worker, since they match the demands of the bureaucratic organisation in contrast to women³. The perpetuation of the claims of a bodiless, abstract, asexual and emotionless worker both obscures and maintains gender relations (Acker, 1992). Acker's framework (1990, 1992) developed to unravel the gendered sub-text of organisations relies on the notion of gender as an analytical category. Although focusing on gender, Acker stresses the inter-relationship between gender and class:

"The structure of the labour market, relations in the workplace, the control of the work process, and the underlying wage relation are always affected by symbols of gender, processes of gender identity, and material inequalities between women and men. These processes are complexly related to and powerfully support the reproduction of class structure." (1990, p. 145-6).

Gender is an integral part of organisational processes which Acker (1990; 1992) identifies as a subtext, emerging through a series of interacting processes. Although continuous and

² E.g Hearn (1996), Hearn & Collinson (1995), Collinson & Collinson (1992) - such work concentrates on identifying different kinds of masculinities in the work place. Although acknowledging the existence of femininities the nature of these power relations are ignored, thereby perpetuating the pitfalls of traditional malestream theorising.

intermingled in organisational life, for the purpose of this thesis the following provides the starting framework:

- (1) Production of gendered divisions: e.g. physical space, institutionalised mechanisms for maintaining these divisions (e.g. men at the top of the hierarchy at work is well documented; organisational practices maintain them - for instance Cockburn's work on technology across workplaces);
- (2) Symbols: the construction of images and signs, which are used to explain or reinforce these boundaries. For example, the association of masculinity with power, machines, technology, femininity with light, clean work; metaphors of organisation such as a lean, mean machine; and gender images which contain implications of sexuality, such as pin ups;
- (3) Interactions: between men and women, men and men, women and women. The multiple ways in which domination and subordination, alliances and exclusion emerge. Within the organisational hierarchy policies are developed which create and perpetuate genders. This also recognises sexuality as an integral part of the production of gender. Acker calls interactions the concrete work of the organisation;
- (4) Identities: these aspects contribute to the production of gendered constituents of individual identities represented by choice of dress, work, use of language;
- (5) Organisational logic: gender depends upon and contributes to the continual processes of creating and theorising social institutions. It emerges through the internal mental work of individuals, opportunities for work and demands for the gender appropriate behaviour and attitudes.

Acker's work provided a watershed, after which a great deal of feminist organisational research turned to focus on the ways in which the body was an instrument of control in the maintenance of difference between men and women. In particular the difference body management strategies required by men and women at work have been revealed in bar work and catering (Adkins, 1995), betting (Filby, 1992) in secretarial work (Pringle, 1993) and in hostess work (Hochschild, 1983). This has occurred within a general agreement that the gendered organisation of work and gendered bodies are intimately connected (Tyler & Hancock, 1998).

Acker's research demonstrates the covert incorporation of stereotypical expectations through organisational practices and processes, which, although they differ between organisational cultures, all perpetuate gendered hierarchies of power. Within this, female managers are

³ Similar to work on the labour market in particular the dual job queue theory (Reskin, 1984; Reskin & Padavic, 1994; Reskin

continually reminded that they challenge the organisational rationality and as Sheppard (1989, 1992) found, most perpetually negotiate the boundaries of gendered expectation. While men and organisations are presumed to be co-determinous, women managers find their organisational life perceived as a contradiction (Sheppard, 1992).

To survive within organisations, female managers must adopt gender management strategies (Sheppard, 1989) to enable them to 'blend in'. Other ways in which female managers feel their experiences differed from their male counterparts was through isolation from male colleagues, from networks and from female staff in support positions (because the managers did not feel it was appropriate to be seen to mix) (Sheppard, 1992). Sheppard documents other strategies adopted by male managers as the application of double standards, limiting women's opportunities to travel and transfer between companies, and the punishment of any women challenging expectations of gender-appropriate sexuality. This results in their sexual identity over-riding their organisational identity as a control mechanism (Sheppard, 1992, 1989). As the service industries continue to grow at the fastest pace (Daily Telegraph, 1999), and women predominate, we need to understand if and how these dynamics alter. It is within service industries that a great deal of research is identifying links between gender control strategies and the body, in particular locating the lived body as the material expression of gender and sexuality (Halford, Savage & Witz, 1998; Tyler & Hancock, 1998).

Research on the gendered nature of service industry contributes to the debate on the mechanisms of unequal gender relations. In particular, different body management strategies required by men and women at work have been revealed in bar work and catering (Adkins, 1995), betting (Filby, 1992), in secretarial work (Pringle, 1992) and in hostess work (Hochschild, 1983). Within this research the gendered organisation of work and gendered bodies are intimately connected (Tyler & Hancock, 1998).

McDowell (1997) in a study of three banks employing 1400 employees, 37% of which were women, analysed the ways in which masculine and feminine were presented through every interaction and the ways in which the body was presented at work. In the creation of workplace hierarchies, particularly on the dealing floor, gender, sexuality and the body inter-played to construct hierarchies drawing on hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity. McDowell claims that the strength by which discourses construct an 'idealised and oppositional masculinity and femininity' was impossible to deny (1997, p. 203). The dominant mode of masculinity which she uncovered revolved around 'a variant of an embodied, manly, heterosexualised class based masculinity ... it is clear that these variations on a theme disempower a range of Others' (McDowell, 1997, p. 203). These kinds of findings are perhaps less surprising because of the male traditions associated with banking.

One domain into which women have traditionally been attracted is the hotel and catering sector, where the control of men and women's labour and the sexualisation of women workers has been clearly demonstrated by Adkins (1995) and Filby (1992). Analysis of employment practices of betting shops (Filby, 1992), a restaurant, a hotel and a fun park (Adkins, 1995) clearly demonstrates that there are two sets of relations operating for men and women. In the hotel, fun park and restaurant, sexual aspects of women (such as looks, figure, physical capability, clothes) were used to determine women workers' worth in regard to where they would work, front line or behind the scenes (Adkins, 1995). Evidence in the fun park includes hiring practices that place less attractive women on small rides in the periphery of the park but large, muscular men on big, popular rides. This is despite the same controls operating on all machinery (the press of buttons where no raw strength was required). Alternatively, only attractive women were allocated to front-line catering work alongside men with skin problems (Adkins, 1995).

These kinds of practices perpetuate the male body as a sign and source of physical strength and power, while simultaneously subordinating the female body as a sign of beauty. By locating

the gendered bodies in 'complimentary' positions, a hierarchy of difference is confirmed between the value of men and women. The association of the male body with strength elevates it above the female body because the standard of judgement continues to be the healthy male body versus the weaker female body, tied to the rationale of reproduction. This definition combined with the beautiful female front line bodies, legitimates the notion that men and women are suited to very different tasks (Adkins, 1995; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1998; McDowell, 1997; Tyler & Hancock, 1998).

The processes by which particular bodies are incorporated into organisational activities, embedded in relations of sexual differences, is demonstrated by Tyler and Hancock (1998) in the airline industry. In a study on airline attendants, Tyler and Hancock identify that the work which goes into maintaining and producing an attractive body, which is demanded by the airline, is both unwaged, concealed and only performed by women. The labour, which goes into achieving the required beauty standards, is considered natural because it is women doing the performing. Consequently, in this instance the inter-corporation of bodies into service work as a highly gendered process, depends upon a *female* organisational body (Tyler & Hancock, 1998).

Across these industries of banking, restaurant/betting and the airline industry, it is possible to identify similar processes occurring to legitimate specific relations between men and women which overall, conform to archetypal female/male subject/object positions. Also evident is the various ways in which processes of gender differentiation subtly differ by type of organisation. Although this work has demonstrated how gender difference is maintained through organisational processes and practices and the embodiment of women, questions still remain concerning the connection of gendered control strategies to masculinity and femininity within the broader dynamic of gender relations.

It is very clear that gender is embedded in organisational power relations and control strategies (Acker, 1992; Adkins, 1995; Cockburn, 1985; McDowell, 1997; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1998)

and that sexuality is an integral part of the broader dynamics labelled gender relations (Connell, 1995; Pringle, 1993). Recent research on the service industries has demonstrated how the body is a material signifier of the links between gender and sexuality, but the more subtle ways in which masculinities and femininities are an integral part of gender power relations remains cloudy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Up to this point, this chapter discusses the research within organisational theory focusing on the ways in which analyses of organisations have incorporated gender. Both this and the previous chapters demonstrate the potential for comparative research on sport organisations to contribute new ways of understanding the ways in which gender inequalities are structured through work. Specifically addressed now is the contribution feminist theory provides to the theoretical under-pinnings of this study.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FEMINIST THEORIES

Feminism is a term with many nuances of meaning. In a narrow sense it refers to attempts to attain equal legal and political rights for women, while in its broadest sense it refers to any theory which sees the relationship between the sexes as one of inequality, subordination, or oppression, and which aims to identify and remedy the sources of that oppression (Tong, 1989). Feminism is strong precisely because it is comprised of many different, sometimes competing, strands of arguments, strategies, and ideologies. Each feminist perspective tries to unravel and explain women's oppression, to understand its sources and to find ways of liberation for women (Tong, 1989). As Messner and Sabo (1990) argue, there is no easily identifiable single feminist school of thought, instead a "multifaceted mosaic of feminist visions and practices" (Messner & Sabo, 1990, p. 1). The multifaceted nature of feminism is reflected through the myriad of continuous debates about the most appropriate ways of understanding the nature of women's oppression (Acker, 1990; Adkins, 1995; Adkins & Lury, 1992; Bradley, 1990; Cockburn, 1983,

1985; Pollert, 1996; Pringle, 1989; Talbot, 1988; Walby, 1986, 1990; Waters, 1989; Witz, 1988). While a discussion of all feminist theories is beyond the scope here, it is necessary to understand the key debates between the different strands of feminism as they inform this study. The key theories are radical feminism (Friedan, 1981; Miller, 1970; Mitchell, 1973), liberal feminism (Kanter, 1977; Wollstonecraft, 1792), socialist feminism (Cockburn, 1983, 1985; Pringle, 1989; Walby, 1986, 1990; Witz, 1988) and post-structural feminism (Acker, 1990; Bradley, 1990).

Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) formulated the beginnings of feminist theory in the liberal tradition with her book 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman'. Liberal feminists believe that the equality of women as rational beings dictates a single, undifferentiated conception of 'citizenship', which makes no distinction between women and men in respect of their legal and political rights (Gaten, 1991). This claim focuses on women as rational beings and disregards the important biological and social differences between men and women, differences which undermine women's ability to make equal use of their political and legal rights. This means that even if we accept that men and women are, by nature, equal in respect of their rationality, it is still far from clear that women's subordination may be remedied simply by the institution of formally equal legal and political rights.

While liberal feminism provides ways to work within the system without directly challenging its fundamental structure, it does not provide the intellectual possibility for critical analysis of the ways in which gender integrates with other social inequalities to reproduce unequal power relations between women and men (Tong, 1989). The main drawback of liberal feminism is therefore the acceptance of the dominant ideologies supporting daily practices of segregation and the over-simplification of the power relationships around the categories of man and woman.

In contrast, one approach, which challenges the dominant ideologies perpetuating women's oppression, is radical feminism. Radical feminists are critical of the 'system', arguing that equal

opportunity for women within the current system is almost impossible (Daly, 1978; Ferguson, 1984; Millett, 1970). To theorise the ways in which all women are dis-empowered by men, radical feminists adopted the concept of 'patriarchy' to explain the systematic and universal oppression of women by men (Firestone, 1979; Millett, 1971). For many radical feminists, patriarchal relations underlie all other forms of oppression and acts to bind all women together with a common interest which over-comes the differences between them (Delphy & Leonard, 1992).

The views of radical feminists in the 1970s excluded any possibility for achieving change among men and women, rather patriarchy was envisaged as a fixed structure which excluded acknowledgement of the variety of forms through which men and women experience social life (Rowbotham, 1979). A further disadvantage with the approach adopted by radical feminism other social factors, such as class or race, are not considered.

One feminist perspective drawn upon here, which enables an analysis of both class and gender, is socialist feminism. Socialist feminists draw on the radical feminist interpretation of patriarchy but argue that it has been transformed by capitalism. Socialist feminists (Adkins, 1995; Cockburn, 1983, 1985; Hartman, 1981; Mitchell, 1983; Walby, 1986, 1990; Witz, 1988) endeavour to make analytical connections between class and gender relations and to relate changes in women's role to changes in the economic system. So while women share a common experience in being oppressed as a group, this is divided by class, colour and political belief. Socialist feminists argue that this oppression needs to be understood, not just in terms of inequalities of power between men and women, but also in terms of the dynamics of capitalism and the role of state institutions in a capitalist society. Explanations of the ways in which women are exploited is achieved by combining capitalism and patriarchy in what has been termed a 'dual systems' approach (Hartmann, 1981; Walby, 1986). The consideration of the ways in which the economic system influences gender relations is a key aspect influencing the

design of this study. Socialist feminist insight raises critical questions about the ways in which gender inequalities are influenced between the public and private work spheres.

Patriarchy continues to be the most useful term available for describing the network of social inequalities, which privilege men over women. Debates continue around the usefulness of the term (Acker, 1989; Barrett, 1980; Beechey, 1979; Cockburn, 1991; Connell, 1995; Halford, 1992; Pollert, 1996; Waters, 1989; Walby, 1990). The key problems associated with the concept of patriarchy include its inability to account for historical and cross-cultural variations in gender inequality, the lack of an intrinsic dynamic to explain its self perpetuation and the lack of consideration for the acknowledgement of differences between women, especially in terms of race and class (Pollert, 1996; Waters, 1989). Whilst there are problems with the conceptualisation of patriarchy, Walby (1989) suggests that patriarchy remains 'an essential tool in the analysis of gender relations' (p. 213).

The concept of patriarchy informs this study and provides a framework at a societal level which prioritises men over women. By drawing on Walby's (1989, 1990) theorisation of patriarchy as a set of social structures rather than one structure, this approach rejects the notion that each man is in a dominant position and every woman a subordinate one. Social inequalities have many varied forms, so while patriarchy can provide this study with a framework at the societal level, it is not perceived to have one causal base or to provide answers for detailed, specific instances of inequality. This interpretation provides the back-drop against which the rationality of organisations is understood as structured by patriarchal ideologies.

The feminist theories discussed so far attempt to understand women's oppression by emphasising both unity and integration. Post-structuralist feminists offer an alternative approach, one that incorporates the notion of diversity and difference (Acker, 1990; Bradley, 1996). Feminist post-structuralists claim that women are not a universal group. This enables an analysis of gendered inequalities which considers women's different subject positions

depending upon their gender, race, age or class. Specific to this study, feminist post-structuralists offer the opportunity to understand in a more dynamic way the interactions between class and gender.

The shift away from grand narrative theories on class reflect the need to find an alternative way to understand the ways in which gender and class interact to construct inequalities in contemporary society (Bradley, 1996). Traditionally class theorists argued that there were specific elements of consciousness associated with the different classes (Marx, 1976). Bradley (1996) argues that in the last twenty years there has been a radical shift in the class structure, so much so that old frameworks for analysing class can no longer explain the dynamics of inequality. Furthermore, the belief that other inequalities can be explained by adaptation of class theory is no longer accepted and there is a new orthodoxy that other elements of social inequality, such as race and class, are not reducible to those of class (Bradley, 1996).

Post-structuralism offers a different way of conceptualising society as it rejects traditional grand narrative theories as no longer appropriate in an environment characterised by change and confusion (Bradley, 1997). Instead, the focus is levied at the diversity of social experience within limited local contexts and at the most radical dismisses the notion of collectivities, such as class (Bradley, 1997). Communities, which traditionally provided class membership and identity, are now displaced. Now the complexities surrounding the changing nature of the workplace and altered composition of the workforce further confuses class. Bradley (1996) argues that class identities are 'submerged' in contemporary society as other factors play a more pivotal role in the process of social identification. Insights from post-structuralism provide a way to capture the dynamic nature of social relationships and inequalities across society.

Within post-structuralism the focus is upon the fluid aspects of society and how diversity and individual difference influence experiences of social inequalities (Bradley, 1996; Mercer, 1990). More specifically post-structuralists stress the fractured and multiple nature of social identities in

modern society (Bradley, 1996; Mercer, 1990). Bradley (1996) argues for a more holistic understanding of social inequalities by balancing this micro level analysis with the features of social organisation at a societal level. Conceptually, this offers a way to understand the paradoxical dynamics of inequality, simultaneously unifying and dividing individuals. Specific to this study, the key ideas of difference, diversity and fragmentation from post-structuralist thought offer a way to conceptualise the interaction of social categories, such as gender and class, and the way they reproduce power structures.

Bradley's (1996) insights provide a way of reformulating the interaction of social categories at a societal level. This analysis focuses on the ways in which inequalities operate at an organisational level and draws upon the work of Acker (1989, 1990). Acker (1989, 1990) makes the connection from the ways in which advantage and disadvantage, identity and meaning are weaved through organisational practices to perpetuate difference between masculine and feminine, male and female. Theoretically Acker removes the façade of gender neutrality in organisational processes and practices.

Acker (1990) provides a way of revealing the ways in which gender inequalities are so deeply embedded in the organisation they appear as common sense. Central to Acker's analysis is the notion of an abstract worker, disembodied from the organisation. Far from being abstract, this worker is very much constructed as male through men's bodies, sexuality and masculinity, aspects which pervade all organisational processes and serve to marginalize women. While Acker's research demonstrates the disembodied worker at the organisational level, she does not focus on the relationship between the realities of individual experience. Acker establishes the difference between male and female and the ways in which masculine and feminine are constructed through organisations, but the ways in which individuals experience their body through work requires development. The purpose of this study is to locate the real experience of the individual body within the matrix of class and gender identities. As Bradley discusses, bodies, identities and gender present a difficult dynamic to analyse:

"Bodily differences are bound up with social identities of gender to such an extent that we can hardly separate them; and biological physical differences are themselves regarded as partly socially constructed and historically variable" (1996, p. 83)

Bradley acknowledges that locating the body within the dynamics of inequality are very difficult, but important. As Connell (1995) argues, the presentation and treatment of the body locates the individual within the social order. A great deal of research in sport sociology demonstrates the culturally specific way in which gender relations are embedded throughout sport (Hall, 1991; Lenskyj, 1986; Theberge, 1991). Specifically, sporting practices legitimate broad patterns of male advantage and female subordination through the ways in which femininities and masculinities are constructed. Sport emits potent cultural messages of male superiority and female subordination, reproduced through a logic of difference. These gendered differences gain legitimacy through the naturalisation of the sporting body which occurs through the combination of physiological, psychological and sexual processes. Pivotal to these power relations is the role of the body because its shape and form provides many messages about an individual's identity (Cole, 1994; Rail, 1995). Sport therefore provides a unique context for such an analysis because the 'body is the material core of all sporting activity' (Hargreaves, 1987).

CONCLUSION

This study uses insights from feminist theories to reveal the ways in which gender, class, bodies and identities interact to reproduce or transform social inequalities. Drawn from radical feminist theory is the concept of patriarchy. This is adopted to provide an over-arching framework at a societal level, within which women are disadvantaged. While socialist feminism enables the implications of the public private divide to be considered, there remained a need to understand the ways in which class and gender interacted in a more dynamic way. Post-structuralist feminism offers scope for consideration of the ways in which individuals experience diversity, difference and fragmentation in today's society.

At an organisational level, Acker's (1990) framework offers a way to understand gendering across organisations in a multi-levelled way as local, context specific and adjustable. Her analysis provides insights to the series of simultaneous processes that contribute to the ongoing construction of gender, to which sex, sexuality and the body are integral (Adkins, 1992; Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Hearn et al., 1989; Pringle, 1989; Savage & Witz, 1992). Furthermore, the bases of difference, commonly labelled as masculinity and femininity, and different classes are foundational constituents in social inequalities and to understand them their practical bases must be explored within the organisational setting.

Within this framework gender and class are perceived as social categories which contribute to the development of an individual's identity. The aim of this study is not to try and explicate whether class or gender is the primary case in the dynamics of social inequality, but to understand the varying ways they contribute to patterns of gender inequality and the construction of identities. Bradley's (1996) notion of fragmented and polarised identities offers a way to analyse the varying ways in which the context impacts upon the dynamics between gender and class and the ways in which power inequalities are constructed.

The following chapter outlines the practical ways in which an analysis of gender power relations will be achieved. This includes the triangulation of data across two case studies, one a public leisure sport organisation and the second case study a private sport manufacturer. Provided next is a detailed breakdown of the collection of the data.

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER V

RESEARCHING ORGANISATIONS, GENDER AND POWER

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to establish how gendered power relations are transformed or reproduced within two sport organisations. Gendered power relations are therefore central to this project and to unravel these relations, the social world is perceived as one in which a complex web of gender inequalities are produced and legitimated. The complexity of these issues mean that an approach is required which provides "sensitivity to meanings and values" (Willis, 1977, p. 3).

Such an approach is typically provided by a qualitative paradigm. Qualitative research places an emphasis on the social construction of reality, the relationship between the researcher and the subject, and an emphasis on meanings and processes that are not measured purely with figures (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The emergent nature of the research means that there is no 'right' or single research method, or a particular research strategy unique to qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Furthermore, qualitative research stresses the centrality of the natural environment and adoption of a range of tools. Qualitative research therefore provides a framework by which to ask questions about people, relationships and meanings, an approach which accommodates accessing various levels of reality and experience.

This particular piece of qualitative research is founded upon a comparative case study approach which falls into four main stages: development of the study, collection of the data, analysis and finally reflection upon the whole process. Questionnaires, interviews, participant observation and content analysis form the basis for the data collection. Data were analysed, in line with a qualitative approach, through a computer package, NUD.IST4. Reflections upon my role in the research process are unravelled in Chapter VI.

THE RESEARCH APPROACH

Past research across sport has focused upon the unequal distribution between men and women (Birrell, 1988; Hall, Cullen & Slack, 1989; Hargreaves, 1994; Knoppers, 1992; Sports Council, 1992; White & Brackenridge, 1985). This work demonstrates patterns of inequality across the entire spectrum of sport, from the structure of national governing bodies to the sport media, with men continuing to dominate positions of power (Hargreaves, 1994). Male advantage is reflected in the larger financial rewards paid to male athletes (e.g. tennis - Wimbledon; golf tours) and consolidated through the concentration of women in lower status positions (Hargreaves, 1994; White & Brackenridge, 1985). While women continue to be clustered at the lower end of the job hierarchy there remains little opportunity for them to influence decision-making. Research analyzing the representation of men and women across the sport industry demonstrates the continuing patterns of inequality since the 1980s. Dewar (1993) labelled this kind of research distributive research where the focus is on inequality in opportunity, access and financial resources. While distributive research is essential in providing proof of unequal allocation of resource it cannot address questions about the under-pinning values and power dynamics reproducing male advantage. Questions of this nature require a different research strategy.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF KNOWING

"Researchers adopt a particular approach depending on their philosophical position: their ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions about what constitutes research" (Markula, Grant & Denison, 2001, p. 261).

As Markula, Grant and Denison describe above, the philosophical position is critical in positioning the whole research strategy. Statistical data capturing temporally specific slices of the world is produced by research within the positivist tradition. Ontologically, researchers within this perspective are driven by three key beliefs. Positivists believe that reality, as we know it, is imposed on the individual; that the outside world is a given, and finally, there is an objective reality which can be exposed. In terms of research, these principles are fundamental in shaping a positivist epistemological approach (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

Epistemologically, positivists believe that research methods are required to capture structures that already exist in the social world, that is there are specific grounds of knowledge to be established (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). This is reflected in the examination of relationships and patterns in the goal of identifying causal regularities across contexts. For example, research would show that Anna Kournikova earns the highest amount in women's tennis, however, this does not mean that she is the best player. Positivists searching for cause and effect relationships reveal what they believe are the hard, tangible social world within which individuals live. Such hard tangible evidence that Kournikova earns greater rewards than her counterparts does not provide insights as to why this occurs. Similarly, data exists to demonstrate that men dominate decision-making positions in sport. While valuable distributive data, this does not provide any reasons for the context in which men gain these positions or the processes which maintain these patterns.

The current research project is founded upon a belief that the search is for the ways in which gender power relations are socially constructed and culturally defined. The exploration is to unravel the dynamics by which regularities and irregularities are articulated. The social world is viewed as a product of the individual consciousness and is created through the ways in which individuals experience their daily life. The challenge is to unravel the variety of ways in which experience, meaning and processes construct networks of power and how individuals accept differences between men and women as 'normal'. From this viewpoint, epistemologically the social world does not pre-exist in a tangible way, so there is not one specific way of knowing about it. To unravel the various relationships and meanings attached to experiences in this world different methods need to be used which can explore the dynamics.

This view of the social world rejects the belief that there are specific forms of knowledge regarded as 'true'. Instead the social world is viewed as combinations of subjective experiences of reality which are created through interaction. While quantitative research has demonstrated the inequalities across sport (Beamish, 1978; Beamish, 1985; Snyder &

Sprietzer, 1989; White & Brackenridge, 1985), we do not understand the ways in which they are maintained and reproduced. This research aims to go beyond the common sense explanations for maintaining inequalities between men and women and unravel the ways in which they are preserved across the organisation.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The particular ontological and epistemological stance adopted directly influences the way in which knowledge is gathered and the kind of criteria used to evaluate the research (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Research in the positivist traditions uses terms such as objectivity, validity, reliability and replicability when judging whether to accept data or not (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In this research, these terms conflict with the philosophical approach. This study is situated within a different way of knowing, which makes it meaningless to judge the research against the same terms used by positivists. Markula, Grant and Denison (2001) argue that it is pointless to have a unified criterion to 'validate' research when there is no unified research philosophy. While there may not be a need for a unified approach, there are criteria by which to judge qualitative research. These include notions of trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

The adoption of a qualitative approach provides the opportunity to achieve balance, intellectual breadth and rigour through the research process (Silverman, 1985). Qualitative research is inherently a multi-method approach, which reflects the search for in-depth understanding of the particular phenomena under scrutiny (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994). It offers the scope to focus on the credibility of data collection, the context of the data and the quality of analysis. Crucial for this research, the emphasis is on the social construction of reality within the organisations. This involves using qualitative methodology to investigate how unequal relationships are maintained between men and women. In the current study, qualitative methodology allows the exploration of the relationship between the researcher and the researched through reflexivity and the analysis of the meanings and processes under-pinning gendered inequalities through observations.

The challenge in the design of this research strategy is to demonstrate that the findings can be accepted as trustworthy, credible and authentic. Denzin (1978) has called this challenge to establish qualitative research as acceptable a 'crisis of legitimation'. There have been many debates asserting what is legitimate knowledge in the qualitative realm (Markula, Grant & Denison, 2001; Silverman, 1985). Central to the defence of the legitimacy of qualitative research is the criteria used to demonstrate rigorous research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Silverman, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Legitimation is achieved through the display of credibility, authenticity, and trustworthiness. Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993) concur that it is a matter of qualitative research establishing trustworthiness which will allow for the claim of 'methodological soundness'. To do this the techniques adopted must "provide truth value through credibility, applicability through transferability, consistency through dependability, and neutrality through confirmability" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 132). Denzin (1978) adopts a similar stance through his concept of sophisticated rigour. Denzin claims that explanatory schemes within qualitative research must be public by way of the description being thick enough (of both the research process and the interpretations) for the reader to determine whether they want to 'accept' the findings.

Silverman (1985) believes that for social research to avoid the trap of drawing simple conclusions and failing to demonstrate a rigorous approach, it must identify disconfirming evidence. One way to avoid jumping to easily drawn conclusions is to seek to disconfirm or confirm assumed relations between data. This is achieved through a research approach that provides rigour through the design. In the context of this study, rigour is provided through the length of engagement in each organisation, continuous reflexivity and the way in which triangulation is used.

Authenticity and trustworthiness are ways of establishing rigour and are an inherent part of this research design through continuous reflexivity. Denzin and Lincoln argue that behind any research stands "the personal biography of the gendered researcher, who speaks from a particular class, racial, cultural and ethnic community perspective" (1994; p. 11). Instead of discussing the notion of 'bias', the relationship between the researcher and researched is

openly acknowledged and contributes to an 'informed' analysis of the organisation. This provides a further way to gain insights to the dynamics occurring across the organisations and supports the ontological view of the world. The positioning of the researcher in this way does not, in positivist terms, 'bias' the research. Rather with reflexivity and perpetual questioning of, for instance, what is being seen or who is seeing it, the rigourousness and authenticity of the research is supported. Denzin (1978) neatly summarises this inherent aspect of qualitative research by describing the researcher as the primary research instrument. In this sense the researcher must become both subject and object (Denzin, 1978). The specific ways in which reflexivity and continuous interrogation of the data contribute to the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research is further developed in chapter six.

In the current study, triangulation of the different methods provides the opportunity to pursue confirming and disconfirming evidence and ensures that the investigation is both rigourous and critical. Triangulation originates from the Greeks with the idea of creating a triangle (with three points) and subsequently the origins of modern mathematics (Denzin, 1978, 1989). More recently triangulation is used as an analogy to navigating or surveying, in terms of locating a position on a map (Burgess, 1991, Cohen & Manion, 1995, Denzin, 1978, Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, Layder, 1993). This approach has been perceived as offering different angles on the same picture and thereby supporting positivists' perception that there is only one reality to be revealed.

Within qualitative research, the notion of one truth is rejected. Research methods are used in a triangulated sense, whereby the ways in which each methods confirms or disconfirms the issue is important and what these findings reveal about the dynamics under investigation. One method is not considered to provide a 'right' or 'wrong' answer, the question is much more about what is revealed. For example, during the interviews an employee may give a politically correct answer about how they recruit staff. Yet, through observations it may emerge that the way they practically recruit staff contradicts the politically correct answer. The different data are not right or wrong, instead they reveal the

complexity of the situation. In this research context, triangulation therefore provides a way through which to analyse a cross-section of subjective experiences and meanings, which would not be yielded through any other research strategy.

There are three methods combined in this research strategy: observations, questionnaires and interviews. The development of these methods is not just about combining different methods, but designing an approach that will yield the greatest amount of depth of information about the ways in which dominant gender power networks are resisted or maintained. The different methods adopted provide many different ways in which the data can be juxtaposed to provide various insights to the dynamics maintaining unequal gender relations. While the questionnaire can be used to collate demographic data it cannot be used to delve into assumptions people make about the nature of their work. Issues around this are very often part of what is perceived as 'common sense' and would not be extracted in any way except by interview.

SUMMARY

Epistemological debates on research methods are complex and ongoing with no universal agreement on what is a 'right' or 'wrong' approach (Markula, Grant & Denison, 2001). The emergent nature of the research means that there is no 'right' or single research method or a particular research strategy unique to qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The research question for the current study necessitated a qualitative approach to capture the emergent nature of gender power relations across the two case study organisations. Prolonged engagement, reflexivity and triangulation provide ways to ensure that credibility and rigourousness are an inherent part of the research strategy.

Firmly situated within a qualitative framework, the research design is predicated upon a comparative approach. Discussed now are the strengths that this approach adds to examination of the research question.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Comparative analysis provides strength to this particular research design in a variety of ways. The task of comparative sociology, according to Grimshaw (1973), is to 'distinguish between those regularities on social behaviour that are system specific and those which are universal' (p. 5). At a broad level, comparing two public and private sector organisations, about which there is limited intelligence, will generate information at a descriptive level and secondly yield concepts at an abstract level. This will enhance current conceptualisations of the dynamics of gender power relations in sport organisations.

The two organisations selected, Past Times and Sporting Goods, are similar in that they are both medium¹ sized firms in the North of England. Located within the broader industry of sport, both Past Times and Sporting Goods fall into the service sector of the economy and employ a large number of female workers in white collar positions and a few in management roles. This makes them ideal case studies to analyse whether gender power relations are changing, and, if so, how.

Alongside these broad similarities, there are also, crucially, some differences between the two organisations. As Oyen (1990) argues, contradictions are expected to be emphasised by comparisons, particularly between fundamentally differentiated organisations such as these. The popular contradictions highlighted between work experiences for women in public and private organisations have centred on the differences emerging from a focus on profit as opposed to the public. Private organisations exist for profit, thus the policy of recruiting the best person for the job is generally overshadowed by the inherent gendering of jobs and people (Reskin & Roos, 1986; Reskin & Padavic, 1994). The public sector has traditionally been far more accountable to the government and public and has therefore had to demonstrate its application of, and compliance with, all employment legislation and regulations. The comparison will therefore allow for the varying impact which such two diverse foundations have had upon developing gender power relations.

¹ This categorisation is based upon the following sizing strategy: micro - 0-9 employees; small 9 -99 employees; medium 100 - 499 employees; large 500+ (Storey, 1994)

Comparative research has grown out of the desire to know more about one case and is an approach which offers explanations of processes by a framework of reference (Armer & Grimshaw, 1973; Hartley, 1994). The fact that Past Times and Sporting Goods, the two organisations, each have very different historical trajectories offers depth to the analysis. Although now firmly placed within the growing service sector, the different foundations generate more questions about the way which they have moved into customer service and the under-pinning assumptions. This again speaks to the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations.

Past Times is now part of City Services, a parent company, and must compete with other organisations for the contract of the centre. Before CCT was introduced, Past Times was owned and managed by the local authority. Emerging from this public sector heritage, the leisure centre has tried to move away from a public sector culture to compete in the open market.

Sporting Goods has always been positioned within the commercial arena but originally within the manufacturing sector. As a manufacturer, Sporting Goods specialised in the production of sporting equipment and clothing. Now the focus is on customer service as all production has been moved out to Asia. Instead of being a manufacturer, the organisation has changed to provide customer support and service to its clients. The UK office has therefore shifted to consist of customer care teams and retains only a small, satellite warehouse/distribution centre, in contrast to what was a large factory supported by a very small administrative team. The juxtaposition of these two organisations allows for questions about the data to be asked, which would not have been possible with a single case study.

The ways, and extent to which, the gender power relations within each case study are similar or differ can be established through a comparative analysis. A comparative approach allows for the simultaneous examination of the ways in which processes, interactions and practices confirm or challenge existing gender patterns and relations.

Furthermore, ongoing comparisons during analysis will generate new questions and new perspectives on sets of relationships.

A comparative analysis, founded upon two organisations originally divergent in their *raison d'être* but now sharing similar goals, promises detail and depth of data, a rich fund of information for theory development and plenty of material for future research. The ongoing interaction of comparison and analysis will generate new questions of the data and provide new perspectives on the under-pinning dynamics of gendered power. With the framework established, a description of the research methods and process follows.

CASE STUDY METHOD

An integral part of the comparative design is the adoption of case studies. The case study, as a board strategy, allows for the in-depth examination of each case over an extended period of time. The case study offers a particular opportunity to gather rich and thick material about social processes (Hartley, 1994; Stake, 1995).

Within a case study the phenomena under study are not isolated from their context, but are of interest as a result of being in that particular situation (Hartley, 1994). In this study, all occupations have been selected within sport organisations because of the inherent male dominance (both numerically and value wise) and reflection of mechanisms in wider society (such as the domination of men and subordination of women) (Connell, 1991; Whitson, 1990). The case study method also allows a variety of methods to be used (Hartley, 1994; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994) which for this research enables an examination of a variety of different logics and realities around gendered relations. Outlined next are the two case study organisations, Past Times and Sporting Goods.

Description of Organisations

Past Times, as a leisure centre, is a public sector organisation, which traditionally has professional hierarchies, offering long term, progressive career structures (Stewart & Walsh, 1992). To enter Past Times at the shop floor level some element of life guarding qualification has historically been required.

Sporting Goods manufactures and distributes athletic sports wear. As a limited company, its primary motivation is profit maximisation. Sporting Goods manufactures, distributes and sells athletic clothing and footwear through various retail outlets and other organisations. Sporting Goods, as a privately owned commercial enterprise, has a managerial hierarchy. In the past, the custom has been to hire from within the sporting network and administrative or warehouse based jobs have offered little chances of progression. There has also been accountability only to share holders. This is in contrast to Past Times where all processes and systems must be open and visible for accountability to both the government and individuals.

RESEARCH METHODS

Theoretical and methodological triangulation are both integral to the design of this study. In-depth interviews, participant observation, analysis of organisational documentation and questionnaires are the methods of data collection. As Webb (1966) observes:

"Every data-gathering class - interviews, questionnaires, observation, performance records, physical evidence - is potentially biased and has specific to it certain validity threats. Ideally, we should like to converge data from several different data classes, as well as converge with multiple variants from within a single class" (1966, p. 35).

There are four main stages to the research process. Although presented as analytically separate, in practice these stages all over-lapped and entwined².

² The implications of this are unravelled in Chapter 6, reflections upon the process.

Research Design

Pilot Study

The development of the main study was grounded in a pilot study, which was conducted in the Midlands during November 1996. Four members in both a leisure centre (Leisurely Pursuits) and a private organisation (Balls4Sports) were interviewed. Access to both pilot organisations was gained informally through a network of contacts.

The interviews under taken in each pilot study cross-sectioned management and shopfloor.

The respondents were as follows:

Leisurely Pursuits	Balls4Sports
General Manager (male) Gym Supervisor (female) Leisure Assistant (male) Activities Co-ordinator (female)	Development Manager (male) Personal Assistant (female) Goods in/out handler (male) Office Secretary (female)

Practical lessons learnt from this process were particularly instructive in planning the main case studies in terms of timings, being clear about what I required from the organisation and how access would be gained. Key considerations included checking the interview room prior to the interview for appropriateness (outside noise, visibility etc.); ensuring battery length was suitable and using tapes that would not finish in the middle of interviews or at sensitive stages. Larger issues included the way access was gained and how that moulded employees' perceptions of me as researcher/consultant/student and how this in turn affected the whole data collection process. Discussed below are the changes made to the interview and questionnaire schedules.

Questionnaires

The importance of administering the questionnaires prior to the interviews arose from the pilot study. During the pilot (Appendix II), questionnaires were administered to the respondent just before the interview. This failed to both provide the interviewee with enough time to complete it and me time to digest the information. Furthermore, it reduced

the overall time available for the interview, which was limited, because interviews occurred during working hours.

Over-lapping questions and too many open ended questions resulted in repetitive data which failed to reveal any dynamics of gender power relations. A challenge was to produce an interview schedule that was flexible enough to use with all levels of staff. Issues included careful selection of vocabulary and establishing questions which could be answered through organisational documentation. Prolonged sporting involvement was considered central to individual histories to determine whether there was interaction between organisational and sporting identities for men and women.

General design features were altered to encourage respondents to complete as many answers as possible. The original boxes were considered restrictive and inconsistent. The order of the questions was changed to allow a gentler introduction to those issues that required the use of broader knowledge. The demographics included did not change. The sex of respondents was not included because this was known prior to administering the questionnaires.

Interview Schedule

It emerged from the pilot (Appendix III) that questions regarding policy and strategy were only applicable to management. It was also apparent that an over-reliance on questions beginning with 'do you' or 'have you' which elicited yes/no answers. These were replaced with more searching alternatives such as in what way, could you describe and how. Issues of control of interviews emerged through over long examples of unrelated stories. As the pilot progressed, this practice was avoided by the utilisation of consistent prompts or re-directed questions.

The small scale of the pilot meant an intermediary arranged interviews. This resulted in meeting individuals from various levels one after the other which, because their frames of

references were so different created unnecessary pressures. Consequently interviews were carefully scheduled at Past Times and Sporting Goods.

The Main Study

Data collection for the main study occurred over a period of April - June 1997 at Past Times and from September to January 1997-1998 at Sporting Goods.

PHASE ONE: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

In addition to gathering information through interviews and organisational documentation, the purpose of my visits was to familiarise myself with the insiders' world of Past Times and Sporting Goods. Originally my observations were largely unfocused, but as time developed, I became acquainted with standard procedures and practices. The observations then became more focused on the relations among and between staff. It was particularly important to make notes about every visit in as much detail as possible because as my visits increased, never again would the surroundings be so unfamiliar (Jorgensen, 1989).

Originally, at the unfocused stage, observations included outlining the main physical features of each organisation. I also included what differentiated areas of each organisation, how the officers are organised, what appears to be normal or unusual and what the measures of 'normality' were. With regard to people in the two cases, observations included how many people are in the organisation, their ages, dress, behaviour, again the usual or unusual. Of particular interest initially were the patterns of interactions, individual body language, conversations, the way people walked away from these, the atmosphere and other similar behavioural aspects. As time moved on, I found myself engaged in more conversations that were informal and casual questioning.

PHASE TWO: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Organisational documentation provides a rich source of insights into organisational mechanisms and are a system of understanding all of their own (Forster, 1994). Different understandings and interpretation of organisational life between members can be accessed through this level of information. All of this data is context specific and provides one angle into each organisation. This stage provided an over-arching view of Past Times and Sporting Goods. The ways rules and regulations are written, who has access to what information and how information is distributed, are a few examples of dynamics which reflect internal power relations.

The information provided by each organisation is listed below:

PAST TIMES	SPORTING GOODS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisational chart; • mission statement; • aims and objectives; • job descriptions; • minutes of meetings; • staff breakdown; • salary breakdown; • policies (rules and procedures, training); training manual for leisure assistant position; • services provided at the centre, such as swimming times, events on in the hall or the ice rink, skating times, crèche facilities, children's activity weeks and bowling times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisational chart; • mission statement; • organisational literature (such as price lists; advertising information); • site health and safety measures; • telephone list.

The kind of information available at each organisations, located within the broader public-private dichotomy, reflects the different levels of public accountability. This is demonstrated through a complete lack of formal organisational practices and processes at Sporting Goods compared to Past Times.

PHASE THREE: QUESTIONNAIRES³

The questionnaires were designed to gain background information about the interviewees (see Appendix IV). They include questions on sporting history and current involvement, age, job, qualifications and training opportunities.

Procedure: At Past Times these were distributed with a letter on UNN letterhead (Appendix V) in which I introduced myself and requested their participation in the study. This was suggested by the Manager who wanted a 'hands off' involvement and wanted to be distanced as much as possible from the research project.

The approach in Sporting Goods was completely different. The Managing Director stated that he wanted the information about his staff which was in the questionnaires. In light of this he requested that all questionnaires be sent to every member of staff, prefaced by a letter written and signed by him, which introduced both the project and me (Appendix VI). After I had aided the filling of envelopes, an administrator posted these letters to all staff.

PHASE FOUR: IN-DEPTH, SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This qualitative, probing approach was an essential component in my research process, described by McCracken (1988) as "one of the most powerful techniques in the qualitative methodology" (1988, p. 7). The interviews were semi-structured containing themes including:

- the respondents perceptions of their job;
- opportunities and constraints within the organisation;
- the impact the job has on the arrangement of their life;
- biographical information;
- experiences within the job;
- relationships between and among staff;
- aspirations and hopes;
- training opportunities;
- knowledge of organisational policies; and
- sport in the context of their life (see Appendix VII).

A stratified sample across all level and type of job was used, where possible, to select male and female subjects. All interviews were conducted in the respective organisations and lasted anywhere from 20 minutes to 120 minutes. Greater insights to these are discussed in the reflexive chapter (Chapter VI).

All information was treated as confidential with only me, the researcher, having access to the data. Before the interview I ran through an outline of what I was going to ask them, stated that they did not have to answer questions if they did not want to and that they could end the interview at any time. I then provided interviewees with a consent form, which they read and signed (Appendix VIII). All interviews were taped with the permission of the subject. No one refused permission. Interviews were transcribed as soon after they were recorded as possible. This process took place during the data collection and in the 2 months following my withdrawal from each organisation.

Stratified samples of personnel were used across both organisations, the numbers and positions of staff interviewed is outlined below:

Position	Past Times		Sporting Goods	
	No. of interviewees		No. of interviewees	
Senior management	4	2 male / 2 female	5	5 male
Middle management	0		4	3 male / 1 female
Lower Management	4	1 male / 3 female	8	6 male / 2 female
Shopfloor (senior level)	5	3 male / 2 female	9	5 male / 4 female
Leisure attendant (PT)	22	9 male / 13 female		
Shopfloor (SG)			14	3 male / 11 female
TOTAL	35	15 male / 20 female	40	22 male / 18 female

All interviews lasted between 25 minutes to 90 minutes and were tape recorded with the consent of the participant (a full list of the interviewees is in Appendix IX). Details of the problems and experiences of the interviews are discussed in-depth in Chapter Six.

³ The problems associated with the sampling is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6, as are the issues around contacting staff for participation in the study.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data analysis and collection are very much an interactive process. The strength of this lies in the ability to ground the theory in empirical data (Hartley, 1994). This was reflected in the involvement of the research process at each organisation, over a period of months. The process adopted for data analysis drew heavily upon the ideas of Glaser and Strauss (1967). The goal was to generate understanding and explanations of gender power relations from the data rather than to test the data against an existing theoretical framework. The methodological approach adopted meant that the entire analytical process involved constant comparison between the two data sets.

One problem with analysing qualitative data is the 'messiness' of the research process (Côte, Samela, Baria & Russell, 1993; Forster, 1994; Richards & Richards, 1994; Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). The main objective is to reduce the amount of information and gain an understanding of the phenomena under study, here the processes that underpin gendered power relations and serve to reproduce or transform them. This is achieved through a systematic approach to the sifting, charting, organisation and analysis of material in relation to the emerging themes and issues (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994).

To aid in the management of the data, a computer-based package, NUD.IST4, was used. Kelle (1997) claims that computer aided qualitative analysis (CAQDAS) is for the intelligent management of data. I will now outline the data analysis strategies and the role NUD.IST4 played.

COMPUTER AIDED QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS (CAQDAS)

The advent of CAQDAS has prompted discussion over how the analysis process will be effected by computer intervention (Coffey, Holbrook & Atkinson, 1996; Richards & Richards, 1994; Tesch, 1990). I believe that no matter what tools are called upon to conduct qualitative analysis, the key lies in the relationship between researcher and data. It will not matter what tools are used to ease the management of the data because, as Strauss (1987)

stated, the potential lies not in the data but in the relationship between the documents and inquiring mind of the researcher.

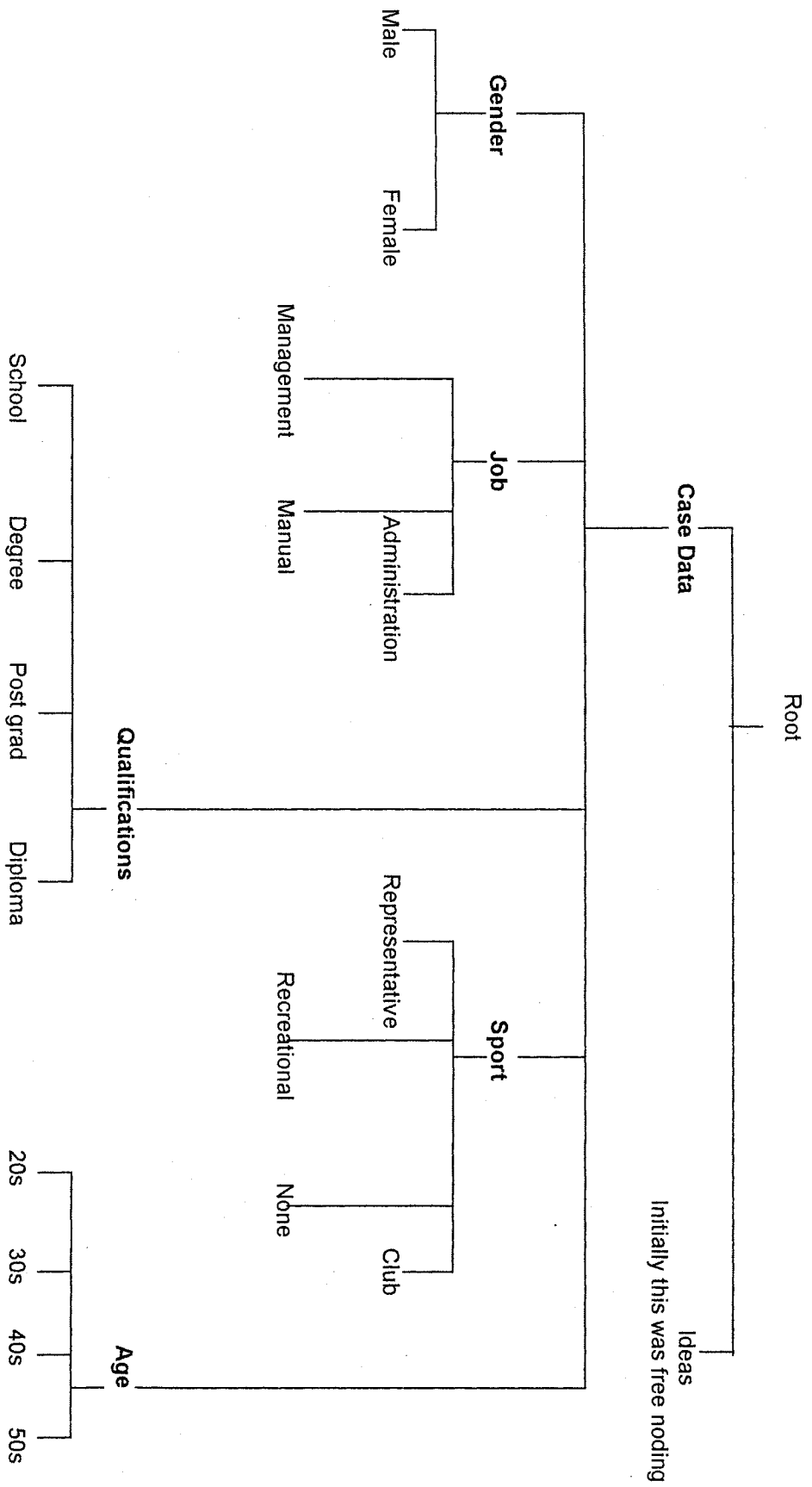
The main drawback posited against CAQDAS lies in the belief that using specific programmes in qualitative analysis results in convergence on a uniform mode of data analysis and representation (Coffey, Holbrook & Atkinson, 1996) which contradicts the foundations of qualitative research. Coffey, Holbrook & Atkinson argue that the introduction of CAQDAS reflects a broader global influence on the research community where software prescribes procedures which underwrite a 'new orthodoxy'. This new orthodoxy, they believe, will result in homogeneity of research rather than the development of difference.

As both the reflective chapter and the following breakdown of the inductive processes involved in my data analysis will show, the adoption of a computer based package merely aids the analytical process, it does not lay down specific laws which will homogenise research. Apart from the individuality of researchers coming to the research process, each person also gathers unique insights to the data during the collection stage. I examine these aspects through the following analysis.

I spent a long time (at least 6 months in total, including transcription) familiarising myself with the data from all the interviews, questionnaires and observations. Before it was possible to develop concepts from the data, it was first necessary to put the data into some kind of order. This involved preparing files so that they could be transported into NUD.IST4, and then importing them all. This included adding headers, formatting the font and sentence length and selecting the text unit. The text unit is the smallest piece of text recognised by NUD.IST4, it can be a word, sentence, line, paragraph or document. For the purpose of my analysis, the text units were allocated to lines⁴.

⁴ The reasons for doing this included: the sentences were my interpretation of where suitable punctuation should be while transcribing, so might not be the true break; a line was neither too long or too short to include meaning; it is the most common text unit used.

Preparation for the import of data also includes setting up the tree of case data. This allows you to broadly classify all the information you have about the broader details of interviewees. This was broken down in the same way for each organisation as follows:



I saw the computer's role in the process as an aid in developing an ongoing organising system. This removed the need for large amounts of paper from the process. It also speeded up the process since attaching codes to the strips of data was far easier on a screen and subsequently, retrieving codes and the relevant data was much quicker by computer. Furthermore, the computer can be a great deal more comprehensive during searches than a human and can undertake far more complex coding and retrieving tasks than any manual system.

Although the computer method offers a 'cleaner' way of handling the data, the actual process remains the same. Initially I 'free-noded', which means I read the interviews categorising data into large chunks. They were called free nodes because initially there was no particular order to them. I attached unrestricted codes to the data, which in my analysis consisted of a range of descriptive and analytical categories. For example (see Appendix X for a greater breakdown):

company history;
attitude to managers;
sport interests;
skills;
access to information.

nature of work;
attitude to staff;
job knowledge;
benefits;

heavy work;
social group;
job description;
changing content of work;

As I came to the end of interviews within each organisation, there were very few categories emerging and nearly all of the data was falling into nodes already constructed. The next stage involved going back over the free nodes and identifying broader categories, which began to unravel some of the dynamics around gender power. This included renaming categories and re-grouping nodes.

Coding is the forerunner to a systematic comparison of text passages where the construction of concepts and types become the basis of emerging theoretical ideas. At this point these categories were provisional and subject to change each time analysis continued. What this process allowed me to do was to ask more questions of my data particularly across the two case studies. Based on questions of how is gender constructed, in what

ways is gender reproduced, is gender transformed, and so on, the following broader categories emerged:

The frame of Past Times	Boundaries
Politics of Hierarchical space	Construction of difference
Customers	Body work
Symbolic masculinity	Sexual politics
Gendered space	Work and pay equality
Crossing boundaries	Beyond the binary
Organisational logic	Femininities
The organisation Sporting Goods	Boundaries
Manual work	Personnel
Job structure	Sexual politics
Industry	Boundary maintenance
Masculinities	Femininities
Dressing the body	Emotions

At this stage, the categories remained too broad and were not specific enough to answer the research question, so I returned to the original theoretical inspiration, that from Acker's (1990; 1992) research. At this point, I adopted Acker's broad categories to ask questions of the two organisations. This allowed a more direct comparison between Past Times and Sporting Goods, because up to this point I had analysed the two data sets independently. I did, however, up to this point use the memo system on NU.DIST4 to note my ideas of the similarities and differences between the two organisations.

Acker's framework provided a broad basis for development through my data, so although her categories were (a) the production of gendered divisions; (b) symbols; (c) interactions; (d) identities; and (e) organisational logic⁵. Within my two case studies they developed in the following ways:

1. Organisational logic – this referred to the particular way in which the organisation was represented through the organisational documentation, hierarchy and various policies, and secondly, how it was impacted by the broader sector context (i.e. public/private);
2. Signs and symbols – this included the buildings and office interiors, clothes of staff, promotional material;
3. Interactions – within interactions, the ways in which spaces were used by various groups of individuals and which groups of staff were involved in key relations;
4. Social Relations – this focused on processes involved in networks;
5. Identity – this emerged as integral to the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations in both Past Times and Sporting Goods. A range of identities within each organisation arose.

⁵ These are discussed in detail in Chapter IV.

Within each category listed above were various themes for both Past Times and Sporting Goods. These are used as the basis for the writing up of each case study. From this point re-analysis occurred where categories were refined and re-grouped as and where was necessary. As this process was occurring, various drafts of the case study data were written and re-written.

CONCLUSION

A qualitative methodological approach forms the basis for analysing the research question, to what extent are gendered power relations reproduced or transformed through working practices in sport organisations? Two case study organisations were identified within the sport sector to provide the basis for a comparative analysis. Data collection occurred over eight months and involved observations, interviews, questionnaires and document analysis. Qualitative analysis, an inductive process, was achieved using NU.DIST4, a computer package. The final stages of the qualitative analysis provide the foundations for the following chapters. Following presentation of the context for each organisation (Chapter VII), is an examination of the gendered power dynamics in both Past Times (Chapter VIII) and Sporting Goods (Chapter IX).

CHAPTER VI

A REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

CHAPTER VI

A REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

"Entry and departure, distrust and confidence, elation and despondency, commitment and betrayal, friendship and abandonment - all are as fundamental here as are dry discussions on the techniques of observation, taking field notes, analysing the data, and writing the report." (Punch, 1994, p. 84)

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the substantive issues surrounding my research experience and in particular to focus on the notion of reflexivity¹ in qualitative research. Punch (1994) clearly establishes the importance of capturing the ways in which trust and rapport is developed throughout the research process. Levels of trust and rapport varied between individuals as my particular background provided easy channels of access for some individuals but for others offered no common ground at all.

Qualitative research highlights the necessity of acknowledging the power and differences which exist between the researched and researcher. Such awareness aims to reduce the androcentric biases, which are present in positivist approaches where the 'pure' experience is believed to be the dominant one. Denzin's (1978) point, that the researcher is an instrument of the research speaks right to the need for reflexivity. By studying social life, Gilroy (1997) claims, we are in fact also studying ourselves. From a feminist perspective, this involves being:

"explicit about the politics of their research, as it is more logical to accept our subjectivity, our emotions and our socially grounded positions than to assume that some of us can rise above them" (Ramazanoglu, 1992, p. 211)

Growing up in the middle of a very large family, actively involved in sport supported by middle class parents had enabled me to study sport at polytechnic and subsequently abroad. My sporting background provided the greatest reference point, both in the leisure centre and at the sports distributor. I was aware prior to commencing the research that I would be noticeable for a number of reasons. For instance I was not an employee, my dress may be different, I did not have a North East accent, and my background and education in England and Canada. My

¹ Observations were recorded in field notes from initial contact with each organisation through to reflections upon the withdrawal from Past Times and Sporting Goods.

identity therefore draws on a variety of factors and experience and the fragmented nature of this was reflected through the different ways in which I developed rapport and trust with staff across each organisation. I reflected upon which elements of my identity would provide common ground with others. I wondered whether my broad sporting background would provide the greatest frame of reference or my work experience as a secretary or being female. I was not prepared for the difficulties I would experience by not having a regional accent. The social power relations which developed during the course of the data collection varied extensively between myself, individuals and the two organisations as a result of the merging or converging of our fragmented identities. The establishing of rapport and trust with the researched is an integral part in establishing the authenticity and trustworthiness of the data.

At Past Times the establishment of rapport and trust was a slow process, hindered by staff working on shifts and what I felt was dis-comfort of my relationship with management. The management staff relationship was a theme I followed up through both the interviews and observations. The pattern of interviews and observations demonstrated that over the data collection period I failed to establish a good rapport with the duty managers at Past Times. This was reflected through the way in which they moved interviews, failed to let staff off shifts and refused to engage in interviews. These dynamics raised questions over the dynamics between senior and middle management. For instance, it made me wonder whether if I had been a male researcher whether the same difficulties have been experienced. It also raised questions about the nature of their relationship with female management. I therefore was provided with dynamics for further investigation by the identification of the ways in which others understood these relationships.

I feel that in both organisations it would have been very interesting to have had a male doing interviews in conjunction with me. I believe that being female affected, at times, the way individuals reacted to me, and how they read the questions. This was particularly pertinent at Sporting Goods, where one female manager said she found it a relief to talk to another female

about her experiences, and where a few of the male managers assumed I knew nothing about sport because I was female. It was obvious that where I asked any questions related to gender, however loosely they were phrased, individuals immediately referred to 'feminism'. I wondered whether, if a man had been asking similar questions, the same response would have been experienced.

Within each organisation I identified key informers at an early stage, these were individuals with whom I moved along the continuum of relationship very quickly. These individuals had a long history with each company and knew all the staff. These relationships were important for gathering ideas and themes, which I could confirm or disconfirm as the research emerged. The establishment of relationships with different staff provided an array of challenges and a variety of different barriers. Denzin (1978) discusses the ways in which the researcher becomes the primary research instrument. I did become the primary research instrument in a number of ways during the data collection. This was illustrated in many ways apart from just in the way I talked to staff and the types of relationship established, but also the ways I conducted myself. For instance at Past Times, when I found wearing casual clothes (such as jeans, sweatshirt, deck shoes²) made interviewees from the shop floor visibly more relaxed. To further help, I also removed the desk, so that we were sitting casually across from one another. At Sporting Goods I dressed more formally all the time and never wore trousers, yet almost lived in them at Past Times. These observations highlighted the need to consider the ways in which clothing conventions were established and upheld, and the ways in which they differed between the two organisations. As this indicates, in the current study reflexivity was an inherent part of the research experience.

The process of gaining access to both organisations sign posted key issues regarding information flow and the management of staff relationships, thereby offering possible themes for follow-up. Past Times was identified as the most appropriate public sector organisation in

² Observations from field notes.

the North. Access was gained through a mutual friend, which circumvented a large number of the usual barriers, such as protective secretaries, lengthy processes of acquiring access and loss of time.

At the initial meeting to discuss the terms of access it became clear that my position as researcher was open to negotiation. Negotiation at this stage was reflected through the request to provide feedback in the form of a presentation to senior management. This required very careful reflection on my part, in terms of my credibility. I therefore asked for another meeting to allow me time to consider my position. The provision of a service raised many questions for me about how this would effect my position, how it would be presented to the staff and what my reasons were for doing the research. The danger of offering a service to the management was that I would be seen as a management tool by staff which could unduly constrain the research. After a great deal of thought, I offered to provide this service but in addition requested the opportunity to give feedback to staff as well. This meant I would be conducting a two-pronged study, collecting data for my research as well as answering questions about the staff's adaptation to Past Times under CCT.

The experience also revealed insights to the manager / secretary relationship which I could examine later through interviews with other staff and observations. Once access was agreed, the next stage of negotiation involved informing staff. At this point the manager withdrew from the research, indicating that staff only needed to know that management approval had been given. This approach afforded insights about the management / staff relationship, highlighting themes that were followed up through observations and interviews.

In a similar way, access to Sporting Goods was originally accelerated by an acquaintance who introduced me to the managing director (MD). Dates and timings of the research were agreed, with the start date confirmed to be after his return from summer holiday. The next unexpected event provided unique opportunities for insights to the internal dynamics of the organisation,

although from a practical angle it was a very difficult time. When the MD returned to Sporting Goods after his holiday Head Office management greeted him. His position was no longer tenable and he was to be replaced with immediate effect. In fact the new MD was waiting in the reception area. The swift handling of the changeover had a lasting impact upon the staff. It also provided wonderful insights to the internal dynamics of the organisation and the nature of relationships at management and staff levels. The whole process became data, which I could use to develop the interviews and observations to identify confirming, and disconfirming ideas about networks of relations. This chain of events also demonstrated an important factor about the organisation, how quickly changes occur and individuals are replaced.

As with Past Times, my initial meeting was about negotiating access and the exchange of services for this access. Upon reflection it was evident that although I achieved access, at the start of the relationship the majority of the decision making power rested with the MD. He dictated the way in which the research was to be started, the way in which staff would be told about the research and who should receive questionnaires. Upon reflection I realised that he saw my presence as a way to gain early insight to the way staff operated, as well as to help shift his position from intruder to leader. This preliminary contact was significant for establishing the early relationships between members of staff and myself.

Time was a crucial element in my journey through both organisations as I moved from an intruder, to investigator, to confidant. It is possible to map the transition in my position from stranger to researcher in the processing of my entry to both Past Times and Sporting Goods. At Past Times it moved over the first three weeks from formally being signed in, receiving a pass and being walked through to just being waved into the centre by receptionists. At Sporting Goods the shift in the relationship took place within the first week. The receptionists were key informers at Sporting Goods, so establishing trust with them was imperative to accessing the informal network of information.

The way in which I was introduced to each organisation provided, upon reflection, great insights to the ways in which the respective management worked with their staff. The methods of communicating the research to staff at each organisation differed considerably and the two strategies mirrored the very ways in which each manager related to their staff. At Past Times a letter was sent out to staff from myself, the only reference to management was their permission to conduct the research. It was also emphasised that participation was purely voluntary. This was done to try and position myself away from an 'official' tool of analysis or a consultant, forced upon staff by management. The early identification of distance between management and staff and the impact this may have on the way policies and change were implemented were themes I picked up later through the data collection.

At Sporting Goods the manager maintained a very close interest in the development of the research. My initial position as outsider and student were firmly confirmed through the method of my introduction to staff. The questionnaires and an introductory letter were sent out to staff at their home addresses. This carried on a theme the MD had begun two weeks previously (see Appendix XI). The two distinctly different strategies by the managers of introducing me in the two case study organisations spoke to the very different ways in which they were using me as researcher. It also provided me with contrasting starting points to establish trust and rapport with staff.

The establishment of relationships with staff at Past Times was very difficult because the majority of staff worked shifts. Furthermore, there were different groups of staff who worked during the week and week-ends. This meant that, although I was in the organisation for a number of months, there were staff who I never met and many who I only saw briefly in passing. Individuals were also always moving around on their shifts and were rarely in the same place twice. This lack of continuity in staff location made it much harder to establish any kind of routine in seeing people and also impacted upon the opportunity to develop trust. One

individual who it was clear I needed to establish a good relationship with was the manager's secretary.

At Past Times it quickly became clear that the secretary to the manager was key to understanding staff inter-relationships. As the study developed there were many examples where this was confirmed. Her office housed the key cupboard, mail boxes, fax machine, typewriter and she was the gatekeeper of the manager's diary. Her office therefore served a dual purpose, an office and talking centre of Past Times. This room was particularly important in the environment of shift work. My relationship with the secretary was one of continued awareness because she had the ability to both confide in me as well as to withdraw. It was the secretary who walked into an interview and asked me to confirm the time of my presentation to senior management. This completely disrupted the rapport I had been building with the respective interviewee and ruined the interview. This action reflected the power the secretary had through her access to information and her ability to dislocate my information gathering.

In contrast to Past Times, at Sporting Goods the opportunity to develop relationships with staff was far greater because of the majority of staff worked full-time, between 8 am and 5.30 p.m. and were also seated at desks. As all staff were on site every day, Monday to Friday, and there was an incredibly effective rumour mill. I had insights to the back-biting and culture of fear at Sporting Goods on my first visit when I spent time with an administrator sorting out the questionnaire and letter introducing me. Her comments about staff and view of the new MD provided some excellent themes about the fragmentation of staff, secretary groupings and manager/secretary relationships to pursue. The administrator was also at pains to demonstrate her unique insights to staff attitudes, an aspect which could be followed up later through observations of staff and the interviews and different perspectives gained. It did cross my mind during situations like this whether my gender played a role in accessing this information. This was an issue which continued throughout the research.

While, at Sporting Goods, individuals inferred that there was a culture of fear, there were many opportunities when these were displayed albeit in much smaller ways than comments suggested. An early indication was the upset caused by the distribution of questionnaires. The questionnaires had been numbered, this staff believed was so that the MD could covertly find out more about them and I was 'informed' that everyone had tipexed the number out. When they were returned only three had had the numbers wiped out. There were numerous other indications however of the staff's insecurities, in particular those interviewed and concerns over confidentiality. I reflected upon the issue of confidentiality and the way in which it influenced the way I wrote up the results. I knew that this was a real fear by staff because of their reaction to the letters and questionnaires received at home. The receptionists had told me that everyone thought they had their P45, so high was the level of insecurity. The flow of senior management out of the organisation was confirmed by long standing members of staff and the fear staff felt provided a theme to be followed up through interviews. I ensured that through the write-up it would be impossible to identify any of the staff. It was imperative that the assurances I issued about confidentiality were delivered.

The organisational status quo which existed prior to the new MD catapulting into Sporting Goods, and of which I had no knowledge, was completely disrupted at the start of my research. This impacted many of the 'normal' relationships, such as that between personal assistant and manager and provided me a unique view of the organisation. It also provided me with an exceptional opportunity to access information. The MD would not have realised it, but he facilitated my integration among staff. When I began the research at Sporting Goods the MD has promised to meet and talk to every member of staff within a few weeks. He did not deliver on this promise. I felt that, because of his failure to delivery, I was perceived as an alternative route to him and this was confirmed through the questions individuals asked me about him during interviews. It seemed that I was an independent outlet through which they could vent their frustrations, but in some cases half hoped comments would get back to the MD. This was

confirmed through casual conversations with staff following up on issues about the MD and his future plans.

There were times during the data collection that I firmly believe my position as researcher was usurped. These awkward situations arose across interviews with both men and women, but tended to be with those who were at least 10 years older than I was. Two interviews in particular jump out. One was with a very long standing manager at Sporting Goods who made it quite clear on his entry to the room that he thought the whole exercise a waste of time and he did not appreciate being told by the MD what to do. I realised upon reflection that his strategy had been to ensure he directed the interview, which he achieved by playing with the tape recorder, picking up a book I had been reading from my bag and making derisory comments. As I am sure he meant it to, this completely unnerved me however the interview provided a very different perspective on the organisation which was equally useful. He put up to question some fundamental issues, such as the recruitment strategy. He was so blasé about the unsuitability of female applicants for the sport industry I felt it required following up. This made me question the nature of his position in the organisation and the relationship of managers with staff. I wondered whether he believed he could state such claims because he was untouchable in his position, or whether he really believed it. This I was able to do throughout the rest of the data collection through the triangulation of methods. The triangulation of data enabled me to substantiate the different claims from other points.

Conversely, during some interviews I positioned myself as unknowledgeable about sport and the industry to encourage individuals to talk freely. I did this for three male managers because it was a very easy way to get them to talk about sport comfortably, their experiences in it and the place of women as they perceived it. These managers also had a women-exclusive notion of sport. I questioned the way in which my gender had impacted this and whether, if I had not been female, the interview experience would have varied and that sport (particularly football)

would have been far more central to the discussions. My observations and conversations with other staff provided a way to confirm or challenge my reading of these individuals.

At both Past Times and Sporting Goods all of the female managers were extremely candid about their experiences within the respective organisation particularly focusing on their disadvantages as women. These topics extended to other conversations, perhaps because they were based upon a mutual appreciation of issues facing them in the course of their work. I do feel that being female in this instance altered the direction of the interviews. Obviously being positioned as an outsider also helped, as did the fact that I had time to listen. Being surrounded by male managers within a male dominated institution, there were common themes which I could pursue through other interviews and the observations.

While I was placed in a position of privileged knower in each organisation, for instance I was given information about sexual harassment cases, confirming whether the information was 'true' or not was not my focus. My focus was who was the informer and what issues were put up to question. At Past Times and Sporting Goods staff were keen to relay their understanding of the sexuality of managers. While the sexuality of the managers did not matter, this demonstrated that sexual identities of female managers were challenged, while male managers were not. This provided insights to some of the ways in which the organisation operated.

There were very particular signs at Sporting Goods that indicated I had established a high level of rapport and trust with some staff members. Two senior male managers discussed at length issues close to their hearts, both to the point of tears. Other staff provided me with a lot of information off the record. I believe that my gender did help gain this information, although it was also related to my position as trusted outsider. Some of the most important information was provided in snatched conversations in hushed tones. The informal recruitment strategies in particular were given to me, in the strictest confidence, very close to the end of my research. Some of this was because a 're-organisation' was imminent, and the male manager concerned

was sure he was going to be 'let go', so as he said he had nothing to loose. Other information provided off the record usually resulted from relationships established over time.

Just as gaining access had been illuminating about the way the two organisations operated, leaving Past Times and Sporting Goods offered rich data. Within the public leisure centre I remained feeling like a relative outsider to the very end. This was due to the large number of staff, size of the centre and the shift work. I could go in every day for a week and be greeted by different people every day. It was also an organisation where people flowed through on an hourly rate and the morale amongst staff was such that they rarely noticed anyone's comings and goings.

I recollect having an immense feeling of freedom each time I left the centre. I found the whole place quite depressing, not helped by having to walk back after evening meetings through poorly lit streets to a dark, under ground train station. I had used a cut through in a bus station until one night there was a large group of young lads blocking my way. Although they did nothing to threaten me, their presence was enough to make me feel vulnerable. This was also coupled with stories from the centre about the rogues they dealt with, regular calling of the police and problems some staff had upon leaving the centre.

The presentation I did for the senior management team brought a close to my relationship I had negotiated with the management of Past Times to a close. I did not feel the same way about the staff. The disenchantment of staff for management initiatives was demonstrated through the zero turnout rate to the feedback session. This did not surprise me because I had such a distinct sense of apathy from most staff interviewed and observations had indicated that if they were not going to be paid they would not attend. I believe that the voting which took place with feet reflected staff's apathy with the organisation and anyone associated with management. I felt sure that both my coming and going at Past Times would have gone quietly unnoticed and would be quickly forgotten.

At Sporting Goods I felt much more part of the organisation than an outsider. This I consider was partially due to the workforce being full time and because by the end of my time there I had met every single member of staff, either during the course of the interviews or through the work shops I ran. This inclusion was demonstrated through staff giving me a birthday card (not from managers, just staff) and the continued contact with some staff after I left the organisation. My last visit was to provide a presentation of employee issues to the board of directors, which brought finality to my experiences at Sporting Goods.

In contrast to Past Times I was very sad about leaving Sporting Goods. This was related to the input I had to staffing issues; secondly, because I came into contact with every single member of staff and finally because I worked the same hours as most staff (at least 0830-1800 hours daily). I think also, that my input to the consultancy process, my regular meetings and discussions with the MD and my presentation to the European Board all provided me with far greater insights to the whole organisation than I ever experienced at Past Times. I also felt that I was more of an insider at Sporting Goods than at Past Times. This I believe was attributable to the standard office hours and fixed location of staff. At the end it was therefore very sad to leave Sporting Goods and the friends I had made.

CONCLUSION

"The process of reflection is not a static one, and very often constitutes a learning process for the researcher." (Flintoff, 1997, p. 170).

In the process of writing this reflection I have attempted to place myself squarely in the middle of the data collection and outline some of the issues and problems I faced. It has been quite bizarre committing to paper my fears and anxieties as well as some successes and leaves me feeling vulnerable and appearing incompetent. This, according to Flintoff (1997), is not an unusual experience. One thing, no matter how many times I reconsider my experiences, comes

to me, how I continually built upon my experiences within both organisations and still have a long way to go.

I trust that I have demonstrated how throughout this research process I was very much a part of the data collection, being both affected by the experience and simultaneously effecting those individuals I came into contact with and the kind of data they were willing to impart. I have also demonstrated ways in which trust and rapport was and was not established during my engagement with each organisation. My interpretations of the data form the basis of the next three chapters.

CHAPTER VII

CONTEXT & CHANGE: BACKGROUND INFLUENCES AT PAST TIMES & SPORTING GOODS

CHAPTER VII

CONTEXT & CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First it highlights the key sector changes of each organisation. Both companies are experiencing fundamental transformation in their organisational direction and purpose, which in turn is impacting upon the constitution of relationships in the workplace. Secondly, I provide the more local context of each organisation in the form of policies and organisational framework.

The context of sport, as one of the last bastions of male supremacy, provides an environment of traditional male dominance. New sport companies are growing rapidly within the service sector, an echelon historically dominated by women. Furthermore, men have a higher record of achievement within the private sector, while women's progress has been faster within the public area of employment (Aitchison, 1997). These conflicting dynamics provide the backdrop for this comparative study, which will identify whether, and if so how, gender power relations are reproduced or transformed.

PAST TIMES

In the last decade of public sector re-structuring, Conservative government policy extended privatisation across the provision of sport and leisure (Aitchison, 1997). The philosophy driving this radical shift was to bring private sector market disciplines to the public arena, thereby increasing competitiveness, efficiency and economic accountability (Stewart & Walsh, 1992).

The introduction of CCT, the vehicle for privatisation, forced a cultural shift from paternalism towards capitalism (Stewart & Walsh, 1992). Integral to the new structure is financial accountability, flexible pay and conditions, increased power and choice for the customer and

introduction of a quasi market situation. Evidence from the EOC (1995) shows that, in the aftermath of CCT, there is an increase in temporary work, within which individuals had fewer rights in terms of holiday and sick pay. In addition to this the differences between permanent/casual, full-time/part-time, men/women are accentuated. Furthermore, the EOC found that comprehensive monitoring of changes in employment terms and conditions are rare.

Past Times, as a local authority owned centre, was put out to tender in 1991. At this first round, the tender was awarded to the in-house team (Leisure Services). When this research started, in April 1997, the management were preparing for the second round of tendering, due to commence in September 1997. One of the problems facing management is the resistance by staff at Past Times to the changing culture brought about by CCT. This is reflected through continual referrals to times gone by and regular reminders of 'living history' against a backdrop of changing hours, budget restrictions and down shifting of responsibility. The following quote speaks to the notion of 'living history':

Daniel (SF Senior):

"We used to have 5-a-side tournament on the night after work, the management used to join in. We used to all play games, basketball, football, used to be a bit of food on at the end of it. That was very good, they used to organise staff Christmas dos, New Year dos"

Daisy (SF Senior):

"18 year ago when I came here it was like Butlins holiday"

Celia (Lower Management):

"It was like a family, even the old women and that could crack on, good camaraderie"

History is perpetually romanticised, to which the sport and social memories are key, and used as a baseline by which to judge today's management. The maintenance of the 'old times' also serves to distract attention from the impact of CCT on the running of the centre and on the change in ownership. Staff prefer to view the centre as local authority owned and run rather than accepting that it is now run by an organisation separate from the authority. Staff are able to retain this notion because when the in-house team won the contract, nothing visibly changed. This feeling of immobility is critical when examining the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations.

An alternative way to understand why history is so important from staff, is to consider the shift from a historically situated theoretical angle. Previously at Past Times, staff were ensconced in a rigid structure, from both class and gender perspectives. The particular structural relationships at that time, provided clear identities and consciousness at a societal level, within which individuals worked. Today, within the centre the rise in the number of women across the hierarchy and the loss of class-consciousness through the fragmented and contradictory nature of society, traditional bridges of relationships are broken. Instead of very formal lines of hierarchy and communication, relationships are fragmented across the centre, resulting in staff finding alternative ways of identifying themselves as groups.

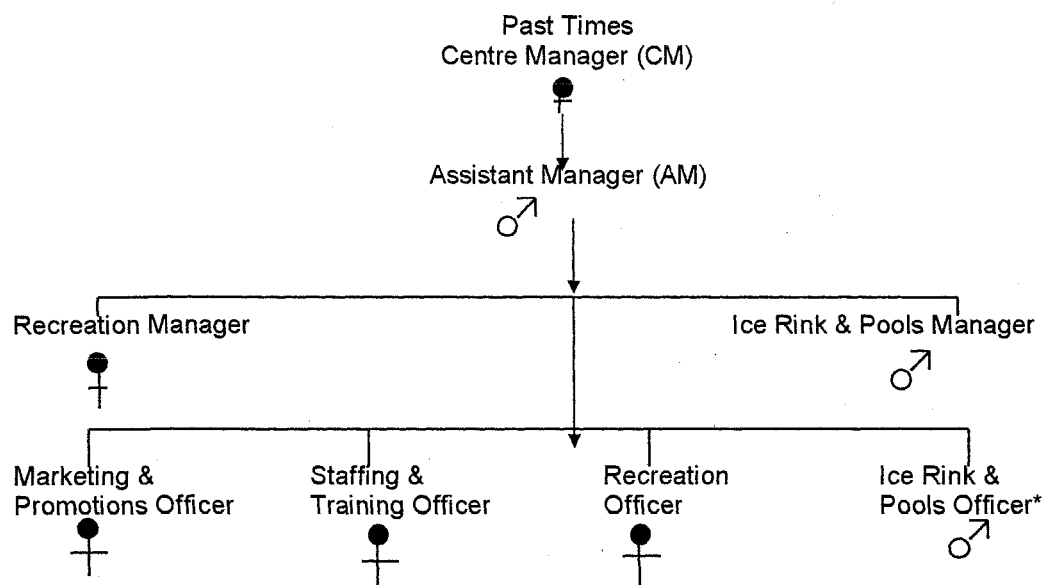
Under-pinning Past Times is an organisational structure, which is composed of the various policies, formal hierarchies and documentation. Feminist organisational research highlights the over reliance upon a gender-neutral formal structure, within which gendered dynamics occur (Acker, 1992; Rentalaio & Heiskanen, 1997). The following analysis challenges the notion of one organisational logic at Past Times and unravels seemingly gender-neutral structures.

OUTSIDE LOOKING IN: ONE VIEW OF THE FORMAL ORGANISATION

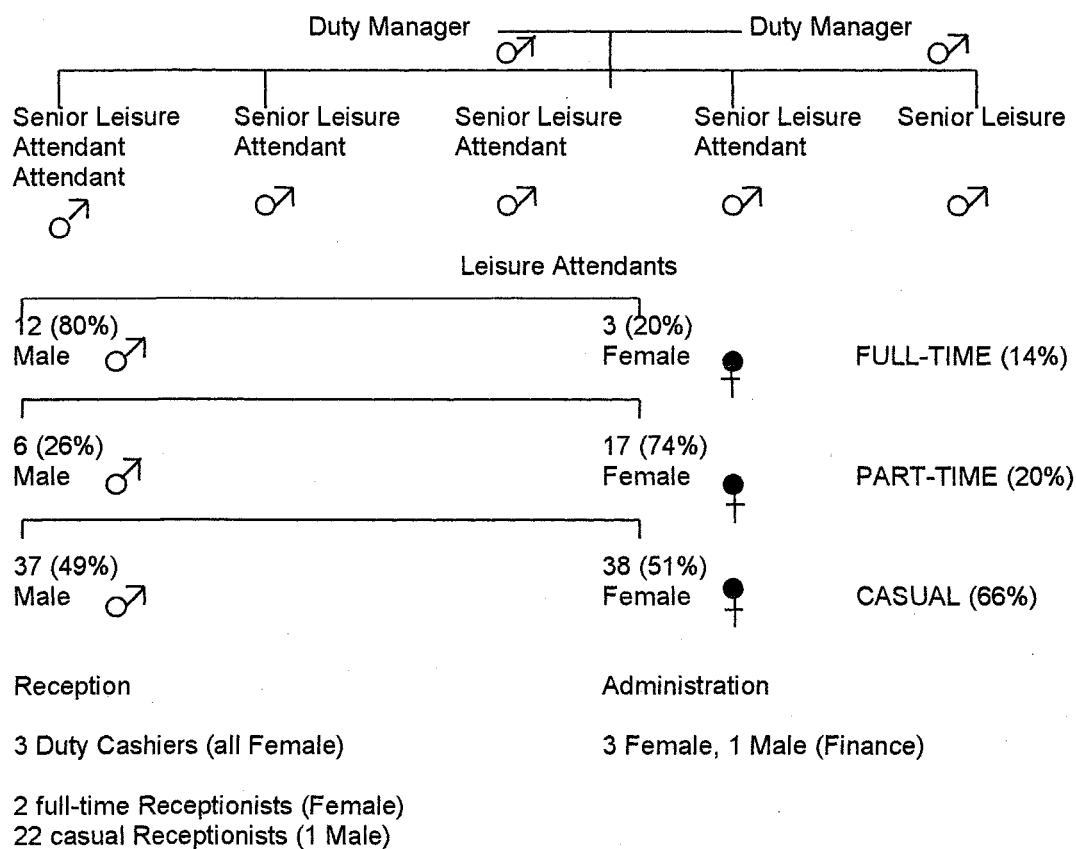
Past Times, despite being 20 years old, remains one of the largest indoor sports and recreation centres in the UK and constitutes over half of the budget for Leisure Services, serving a population of approximately 300,000. The design of the centre was for extensive sporting provision as well as family leisure opportunities. The success of this design is reflected in it's attraction to millions of customers each year.

159 staff work at Past Times on a mixture of full time, part time and casual contracts. Employees at Past Times are ostensibly controlled through their formal positions across the organisational hierarchy. This is as follows:

The Organisational Hierarchy of Past Times



* This individual also works as a Duty Manager.



The work force at Past Times consists of a core team of 39 full time staff, 23 (59%) of which are men (17 are senior or general leisure attendants). Overall, women constitute 58% of the total work force at the centre. The core team of full time staff constitutes 25% of the total staff and they are supported by 14% of employees working part time. Sixty one percent of the work force is therefore casual. Such a distribution of staff demonstrates the reliance on non-standard workers, which is reflective of trends across service industries (Adkins, 1995; Filby, 1992; Urry, 1990; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1998). This pattern provides employers with efficiency gains and greater control over labour costs, since the employer is not so restricted by employment legislation and can take on staff or lay them off according to the changing economic conditions (Labour Market Trends, 1998).

Past Times, as a bureaucratic hierarchical organisation gains authority from individuals in positions across the organisation abiding by the rational technical order. The bureaucratic organisation assumes that staff observe written rules as they go about achieving their daily activities in line with the job descriptions and regulations (Clegg & Dunkerley, 1980). Inherent to this are policies which reproduce practices over time. The focus of the next section are the unintentional or intentional ways in which the use of these by staff perpetuate the concept of a gender neutral organisation. These include from the most obvious, the Equal Opportunities Policy, through to Job Descriptions and that which perhaps has the most unintended impact of all, the Uniform Policy.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

This policy is in a management handbook available to management. It is written and up-dated by staff in the local Council. A Personnel Officer is located at City Services (the parent company) for personnel support to all staff, although the manager is ultimately responsible for all employees in the centre. An equal opportunities policy, now required by law, is a step towards ending the sexual division of labour (Cockburn, 1991).

Access to this was requested regularly, but I did not actually see a copy of it. The inability of management staff to provide easily what is claimed to be an integral part of organisational policy indicates its practical invisibility. Examination of this as a contributor to the gendered organisation was impossible. It was noticed that on all job advertisements placed by Past Times is the slogan 'we are an equal opportunities employer'.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

A job specification is designed to outline the ideal profile of candidates for a particular position. These usually include a description of the type of individual required, the relevant qualifications, the kind of knowledge demanded, particular skills, aptitudes and preferred experience (Goss, 1996). Past Times adopts job descriptions, rather than specifications, which outline tasks and responsibilities for each position and locates them within the organisational hierarchy. Such a location is based upon an abstract differentiation between jobs (Acker, 1990). These are much broader and general in nature and all of them contain the following statement, which provides the relevant manager with flexibility in the delegation of tasks while simultaneously reducing the amount of control the employee has over their job:

*" * will undertake such other duties as may be directed by the Manager in the interests of the Centre users and staff;*

the post holder must carry out his or her duties with full regard for the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy."

Within each job description the title and location of the job is listed, as well as the department to which it is responsible, the direct reportee and purpose of the job. The salary scales are not listed anywhere on the description. Each job description differentiates between the principle responsibilities and main duties. The main duties are split up into the following categories:

- health and safety
- training and development
- facility presentation
- administration and finance
- personnel; and
- staff.

The job descriptions for senior management focus on management of resources and programmes, marketing, financial responsibilities and to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction. Descriptions differentiate between areas of responsibility for shop floor managers and focus on the provision of a quality leisure experience for all customers, the co-ordination of staff deployment and following administrative procedures.

The officer's description outlines the expectation of support they should offer to their respective manager, their responsibilities as a rostered Duty Manager, monitoring of attendants in their areas and the management of equipment. The job descriptions at Past Times for shop floor positions all highlight as a principle responsibility the need 'to have a customer conscious focus'. Beyond this, those working on the centre floor their job included health and safety, customer service, training and development and facility presentation. The descriptions have the old city council name across the top as well as the now disbanded department within which the individual is located. These indicate the lack of attention paid to job descriptions and shows they have not been up-dated within the last 5 years.

Through the job descriptions broad sweeps of the roles are provided through which universal, disembodied, asexual workers are called up. The similarity between all the descriptions indicates that a generic standard is adopted, from which slight adjustments are made between different levels of job. These descriptions indicate that when they are adopted during the recruitment process a formula individual is required. Reliance on the job description to gain insights to the type of individuals hired disregards the influences of the individuals doing the interviews. As Reskin and Hartmann (1986), Reskin and Roos (1990) and Reskin and Padavic (1994) argue, decisions about future employees and employers are not made in a vacuum, they are effected by the experiences and preferences of the individuals involved.

UNIFORM

As soon as you enter the centre the different uniforms are easy to identify, ranging from red polo shirts and black shorts for those engaged in active work to blue suits for those sitting behind desks. Uniform is necessary for the creation of a professional identity but more importantly in the context of a leisure centre for health and safety reasons - staff must be highly visible for members of the public to easily identify them. At Past Times the uniform code is clearly written down for all staff, included in their information packs and discussed during inductions. Close surveillance of staff prior to shifts starting also ensures the code is adhered to and disciplinary action ensues when staff do not adhere to uniform regulations. Non-compliance is a sackable offence after three warnings. Staff are well aware of this, as the following quote demonstrates:

Carter (Lower Management):

"It is a condition of service that we follow the uniform code. We have sent members of staff home for having black trainers because they have got to be predominantly white"

Those in the reception area, administrative positions and management wear the following:

- tailored navy jacket with two patch pockets
- fully lined navy skirt with back pleat
- tailored navy trousers
- plain cream, slash neck blouse
- white event blouse
- company tie.

They are also required to wear:

- blue/black shoes
- dark tights or socks.

The shopfloor uniform is more casual, suited to the requirements of the job, such as lifting, heaving and moving around:

- Puma multi-coloured leisure suit
- Puma multi-sport polo shirt (part-time and casual are provided with 1, full time staff 2)
- navy blue Puma training shorts
- 1 only Navy blue gymphlex, wrap-around skirt
- white trainers
- wed sweatshirt
- white socks.

All members of staff must wear their name badge, if it is lost they must pay for a replacement immediately. Excerpts from company policy on uniform and management's perception of it are as follows:

As professionals, standards of dress and personal appearance are very important, we want to create the best possible image to our customers and competitors. A specific uniform has been provided for you and you must wear it at all times. This uniform is not to be worn outside of work hours. (Excerpt from the company policy on uniform).

We feel that personal appearance makes an important contribution to our high standards and the reputation of Past Times¹ ... Long hair should be worn clean and tied back. Jewellery may be worn but it should be kept to a minimum as it could become detached and lost. A necklace would easily be snapped in a rescue or you could scratch someone with a ring. Ear studs are allowed provided they are of plain gold, ear rings are not allowed.

Barry (Senior Management)

"A code of dress and I will read you the management one. Jacket and name badge must be worn at all times whilst on the shop floor, maybe relaxed depending on seasonal temperature and the manager's discretion. Dark coloured socks must be worn, not white or white coloured, black/navy tights must be worn (female members of staff), black/navy shoes must be worn. Attitude, always be courteous, attentive, helpful, positive, caring. Do not eat or chew whilst on duty, or roll your sleeves up."

Besides making staff highly visible across the centre for customers, uniform serves to create a level playing field between staff. Women and men wearing the same clothes become homogenised since the only way to differentiate between staff is to be close enough to read their name badge. Uniform policy may therefore have unintentional effects upon gender relations which are only visible upon closer examination, for instance, what happens if the policy is challenged by men or women wishing to wear skirts/trousers and how does the homogenisation of men and women effect customer perceptions of staff roles.

Past Times' uniform policy upholds a visible differentiation between men and women which has institutional support for penalising any offenders of the policy. This policy, through its male/female distinction, highlights that an assumption of fundamental difference between men and women exists and impacts on their comportment at work.

SUMMARY

Past Times is caught up in a society of increasing polarisation, fragmentation and the loss of class-consciousness. Traditionally, the bureaucratic organisation is a rational system with no room for gendered bodies which have emotions, children, and sexuality:

'an abstract worker has no body, no gender and no personal goals outside work' (Rantalaiho & Heiskanen, 1997, p. 13)

Within the bureaucratic framework, the abstract worker is represented through the roles and responsibilities allocated to disembodied positions across the organisation which is argued to obscure and perpetuate under-pinning gendered relations (Acker, 1990; Rantalaiho & Heiskanen, 1997). Acker (1990) claims that although organisational processes, such as the appraisal and recruitment strategy, represent a gender-neutral organisational logic, inherent to the logic are specific assumptions about the characteristics and competencies of staff which depend upon gendered and sexual bodies to perform organisational tasks.

At Past Times the job descriptions call upon generic individuals to fill positions across the centre. The majority of these jobs involve working closely with the public, work which many authors demonstrate to be associated with stereotypical female characteristics (Adkins, 1995; Cockburn, 1991; Filby, 1992; Pringle, 1989). Whether generic, universal characteristics are adopted can only be examined once the individuals who recruit are in place, since they bring with them assumptions about suitable workers. Furthermore, the lack of access to the equal opportunities policy indicates it is not an integral part of the way managers accomplish their

¹ In the policy provided, this actually referred to 'Department' – which demonstrates these have not been up-dated since the

work. The most compelling evidence that gendered assumptions under-pin the formal organisation is the uniform policy. Criteria are clearly predicated upon a differentiation between men and women which is institutionally supported by way of disciplinary action.

The organisational documentation, in isolation (e.g. uniform policy), indicates that gender does under-pin the formal operation of Past Times. To examine how much further these gendered divisions extend it is necessary to visit the centre and observe work in action. This forms the basis for the following chapter. The ways in which the organisational structure at Sporting Goods is predicated upon gender based divisions is the basis for the next section.

SPORTING GOODS

Sporting Goods, in a similar fashion to Past Times, is emerging from a heritage based around the family. The family traditions are far deeper at Sporting Goods, since about a quarter of the current work force started working there because of family connections. Almost all of these people also met their future spouse through working for Sporting Goods.

This is a heritage which is quickly disappearing as the organisation struggles to compete in a commercial, competitive, and changing environment caught up in the dynamics of globalisation. With manufacturing now contracted out to factories in East Asia the company has turned to distribution and customer service. Staff are not only contending with this change in culture but simultaneously with a management decision to become an independent organisation. For the last nine years Sporting Goods was part of a much larger multi-national organisation. This had provided a financial comfort zone. Just 12 months earlier a management buy out (MBO) had ripped away this security, immediately replacing it with high financial targets and related instability.

organisation contracted out and preserves links to the tradition of the public sector.

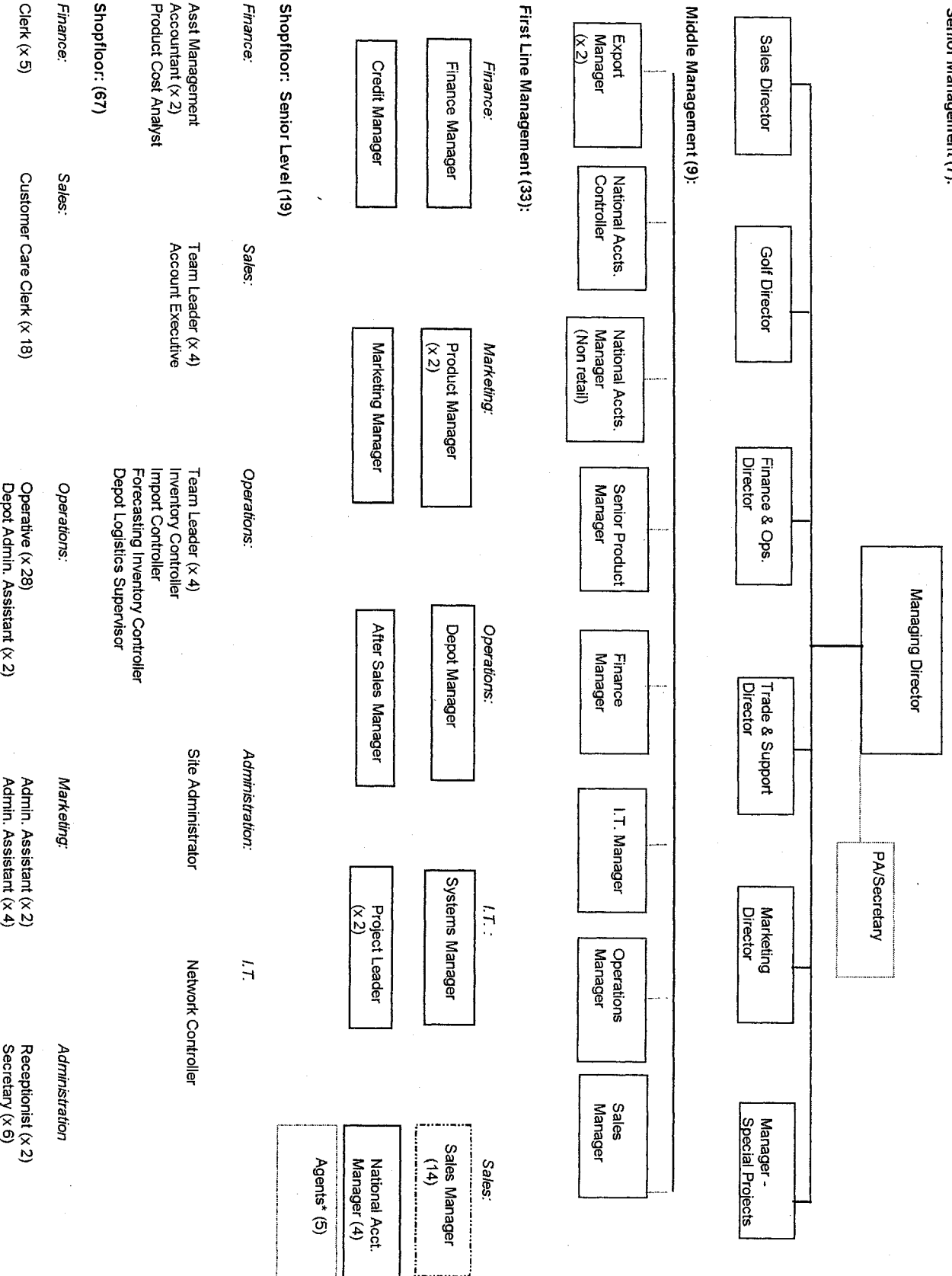
Such a sudden change in circumstance occurred with no staff liaison, leaving employees confused about the impact on their jobs. All they know is that in the aftermath of perpetual senior board re-organisation they have a job to do, one which has not actually changed in the last 8 or 9 years despite the major over haul of the company's direction. Fear, apprehension and uncertainty characterises the atmosphere at Sporting Goods at the time of the research.

FROM THE OUTSIDE, LOOKING IN

Insights to an organisation begin to form the moment you approach the building it or the first time you flick through organisational literature. As an outsider the only ways through which a company can come to life is through the formal documentation which outlines the roles across the hierarchy and the distribution of responsibilities and any other information which, in that context, constitutes the formal structure. It is to this element of the structures supporting Sporting Goods which I first begin to gain some knowledge and understanding as to the ways in which gender power relations are constructed and reproduced.

ONE VIEW OF THE FORMAL ORGANISATION

Traditionally the organisational logic of an organisation occurs in written forms, such as rules, regulations, manuals and other documentary evidence (Acker, 1992). Included, for example, would be job descriptions, evaluations, disciplinary procedures, salary scales and equal opportunity policies. The most visible aspect of any company is the organisational chart, which for Sporting Goods appears in the following way:



Sporting Goods employ one hundred and thirty five employees, 133 of them work full time, 84 are male and 51 female. Eighty-six staff work on the shop floor (either in the warehouse or offices) and there are 14 managers based in the offices. This number excludes both the sales managers who are out on the road and the agents who are employed on a contractual basis but are treated as managers - all of these employees are male. Of the shop floor staff 48 are female and 38 male with the majority of women working in the offices (41) and most of the men in the warehouse (33). The following figure breaks down the distribution of bodies across the entire organisation by gender:

	<i>All Staff</i>			<i>Warehouse Staff</i>			<i>Office Staff</i>		
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Senior Management	7	-	7	-	-	-	7	-	7
Middle Management	8	1	9	1	-	1	7	1	8
FL Management	12	2	14	1	-	1	11	2	13
Sales managers	19		19	-	-	-	19	-	19
Total Management	46	3	49	2	-	2	44	3	47
Shopfloor (SL)	10	8	18	5	-	5	5	8	13
Shopfloor	28	39	67	26	6	32	2	33	35
Total Shopfloor	38	47	85	31	6	37	7	41	48
Total Staff			134			39			95

These figures reflect the major difference in distribution of men and women on the shop floor across the warehouse and staff. Two female receptionists work part-time and during peak periods casual workers are employed to work in the warehouse. In contrast to Past Times, there are no shifts, all staff work an 8 hour day with 1 hour breaks (37.5 hour week) except the warehouse staff. They work a 36.5 hour week which includes finishing at 12.30 on Friday².

² These hours were due to be flattened out so that staff were present in the warehouse for the full five working days.

POLICIES

Sporting Goods is an organisation represented through the equipment it provides to the sporting industry and the sponsored athletes paid to be associated with each sport. Two years of fundamental organisational change, a sudden change in the Managing Director and tight financial demands from banks have all created an environment in which crisis management is the norm, and long term strategic planning a dream. Within this maelstrom of organisational chaos, fundamental issues are not addressed, particularly with regard to personnel. The result is, at the time of the research, there is no personnel officer on site and no organisational documentation on the following:

Jack (Senior Management)

"We don't have anything. We have no job descriptions we have no appraisal system, we have no salary structures, we have no graded structures with the exception of cars which is you know, cars seem to be graded so erm he who shouts gets heard"

The only palpable information available are catalogues of the product range, price lists, a one sheet tick box induction and a yellow pages which outlines fire officers, first aiders, key holders and rules for using the pool car. The only one well known 'perk' for working at Sporting Goods is being able to buy equipment or goods at 20% less than trade. This is not committed to paper and has been passed on by word of mouth.

Although no official documentation exists for organisational policies, the general rules and regulations are outlined below.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

It appears that the only way to find out what individuals do is to work with them:

Maddy (SF Senior)

"there are no real job titles and no real idea as to what a person does until you have worked with them."

PAY SCALES & INCENTIVES

Salaries are confidential and staff are not allowed to disclose their income.

Nanette (Shopfloor)

"There are no set rates at all for anything, I think the only set rates are in the warehouse 'cos they are paid like on an hourly rate."

Lucy (Lower Management)

"They are not structured, there is no official ladder."

Within the warehouse the hourly rate varies according to your level, i.e. operative, chargehand or supervisor. Over-time is only paid to staff working in the warehouse over the basic 36.5 hour week.

There is a commission structure in place for those in sales and on the Board of Directors. Company cars are available for sales people on the road and the Board of Directors.

UNIFORM

Although there is no official policy on uniform, in the offices Friday has become a dress casually day. The following member of staff discusses this:

Larry (Lower Management)

"Monday to Thursday is supposed to be normal office attire and Friday was introduced as a day where you could go casual."

Across the company there is a relaxed approach to dress by male management, who usually wear chinos and sport shirts while female managers and secretaries are generally in suits or equally smart clothes. Men in the office dress in a shirt and tie while the women's approach varies from casual smart to relaxed (e.g. leggings and tee shirts). In the warehouse staff have a company coat and overall to wear which is accompanied by blue work wear trousers.

SUMMARY

Sporting Goods, like any other commercial organisation in the 1990s, is struggling to appease the shareholders and financial backers within a broader culture of downsizing, take-overs and global market pressures supported by fast developing technology. These pressures have resulted in continual short-term solutions without any intervening period of stability to adjust.

In contrast to the public sector, where employees are traditionally perceived to have long term, secure jobs, the commercial sector offers short term, more insecure jobs and careers (Heery & Salmon, 1998). The notion of the organisation surviving independently of particular individuals (i.e. through a reliance on the continuity provided by the formal structure) becomes even more pertinent in an era characterised by instability. Organisational logic is in short supply at Sporting Goods by way of written documentation, data which at Past Times presents images of an abstract, disembodied, asexual worker. The under-pinning rationale for bureaucratic arrangements is predicated upon particular male bodies and relations (Acker, 1992; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1998), but where, like Sporting Goods, no written policies, rules or regulations exist, the informal dynamics take on an increased importance for the constitution of gender power relations.

The presence of a hierarchical structure denotes an organisation with authoritative characteristics which clearly differentiates between male and female bodies vertically. Researchers claim that hierarchies are fundamentally gendered because they are constructed on under-pinning assumptions of those committed to paid work are 'naturally' more compatible with authority and responsibility. Acker speaks to this point:

"a "job" already contains the gender-based division of labour and the separation between the public and the private sphere" (1990, p. 149)

Individuals who cannot commit fully are placed in the lower ranks. Sporting Goods, at a first glance from the outside, has a hierarchical structure which supports this view.

The lack of formal documentation through which to examine Sporting Goods reflects a hollow, empty organisation which comes to life through the interactions of individuals with each other. This forms the focus for Chapter IX. Through this analysis greater insights to the ways in which gender power relations are reproduced or transformed can be provided.

CONCLUSION TO PAST TIMES AND SPORTING GOODS

"Levels of skill, complexity and responsibility, all used in constructing hierarchy, are conceptualised as existing independently of any concrete worker" (Acker, 1990, p. 149)

Through this chapter I presented the context of each case study and examined the reality of a gender neutral organisational structure at both Past Times and Sporting Goods. Sporting Goods, moving away from a manufacturing heritage and into customer service, operates on the basis of very little known formal processes. The concentration of men across decision making positions and women in administrative and customer care positions indicates that certain assumptions of job suitability are predicated upon gendered divisions. This is further supported by the boss-secretary relationships, where the secretarial positions are filled by women, and the warehouse which is dominated by male bodies.

The patterns at Past Times are slightly different, with the management split between men and women, but more importantly a woman leading the management team. There are evidences of gendered assumptions governing the allocation of work, with women dominating the reception and men the shopfloor management positions. Uniform policy also serves to highlight differences between men and women.

Acker (1992) believes a gendered substructure emerges through the spatial and temporal arrangements of work, rules governing behaviour and the relations between work and home. These links are embedded in and reproduced through day to day practices appearing gender neutral. Certain aspects of the organisational realities at Sporting Goods and Past Times are gendered, despite being accepted as gender neutral by most people in the work place. The primary concern for the following chapters is to unravel the ways in which the gendered sub-structure produces a facade of gender neutrality through the daily activities of employees and employers.

CHAPTER VIII

CASE STUDY ONE: PAST TIMES – A PUBLIC LEISURE CENTRE

CHAPTER VIII

CASE STUDY 1: PAST TIMES¹

A PUBLIC LEISURE CENTRE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is, through an analysis of interactions across the centre, to examine if and how gendered power relations are weaved through both the formal and informal practices and processes at Past Times. The over-arching structure for unravelling these is adopted from Acker (1990, 1992)² where sub-sections of signs and symbols, interactions and identities are adopted. Themes specific to Past Times emerge within these broad categories.

The previous chapter examined the various elements of Past Times which represent one view of the organisational 'structure'. This section analyses the ways in which various aspects of Past Times' systems and processes contribute, at a different level, to the whole organisation. Initial examination focuses on the most visible signs or symbols impacting the construction of gender power relations as you enter the centre. Considered next are interactions across the centre through the construct of space and relationships between staff. In the last section, the ways in which interactions, the organisational logic and signs and symbols all contribute to particular constructions of identities is discussed. The dynamics between identities is integral to the ongoing reproduction or transformation of gender power relations. In particular the role of masculinities and femininities within these mechanisms provide insights to the role of the body in gender relations. Prior to the examination of signs, interactions and identities, the impressions gained from all my visits are weaved into an account of walking through Past Times.

¹ All names of companies and individuals have been changed to protect the anonymity of those involved.

² See Chapter 4 for a discussion of this.

STEPPING IN³

As you approach Past Times the enormity of the building is overwhelming. It is nestled in the middle of the city, rising up from the surrounding buildings. It is possible to gaze inside from two sides of the building, where huge glass frontages rise up three storeys and the domed glass roof reaches up to the sky. To get to the front door you walk up a ramp, from which you can gaze into the leisure pool, seating area and watch children vigorously playing on various arcade machines.

On entering the centre the familiar chlorine odours mix with freshly cooked chips and burgers wafting from the often-bustling canteen. Other facilities spread across the centre include a multi-purpose sports hall, leisure pool with hydro-slide, learner pool, wave machine and diving tank, 8 squash courts, an ice rink, skate shop, climbing wall, bar, cafeteria, children's play area, sauna suites, sun centre, fully equipped gym, aerobics studio and indoor bowls hall. Function and conference facilities are available as well as a small meeting room. The seating capacity in the hall is 1800 and it has staged events such as BBC Children in Need; Antiques Road Show; International Table Tennis; National Basketball League and World Snooker.

In front of you on a wall in the reception area is a guide to the centre's layout, beyond which five receptionists sit behind a semi-circle of bullet-proof glass. Behind the receptionists, a telephonist constantly tries to stem the incessant ringing of the telephones. The queues of people waiting for service, the beeping of computers, screaming of impatient children and general hubbub of customers generate a continual pressure on the receptionists for a quick and efficient service. This area is usually dominated by women, although on two visits over four months a male receptionist greeted customers (he was at the window on the outer edge). Informal conversations with staff revealed that Arthur had only recently been appointed as a casual receptionist, so his hours were erratic and infrequent.

³ All the observations captured in this descriptive introduction to the Past Times were recorded in field notes.

Twenty nine individuals, 28 of whom are women, accomplish the meet and greet role. The dominance of women in this role reflects wider, stereotypical notions of gendered ability and one which continues to be perpetuated through the majority of service industries (Adkins, 1995; Filby, 1992; Hochschild, 1983; Urry, 1990). The identification of particular jobs as gender appropriate, as with these receptionists, contributes to the social sanctioning of specific feminine characteristics such as caring and nurturing (Acker, 1992; Adkins, 1995; McDowell, 1997). Receptionists' most visible task, that of offering a high level of customer service, is saturated with social meaning. This process locates women, both symbolically and culturally, in subject positions that affect their position in work power relations. The location of women on the front line also provides a distorted impression of the number of females likely to be working in the centre since first impressions last, and the first impression as you approach Past Times is one of female faces.

Approaching the checkpoint entry barrier an attendant is usually engaged in conversation with people they know well. The conversation sometimes pauses briefly for a cursory glance at customers' tickets and waves them through. You immediately notice the different colour uniforms, from the conservative blue in reception to the bright red of the attendants.

The correct task for the attendant on the gate is to check tickets and answer any queries customers may have. In some ways, this is not dissimilar from the role receptionists' undertake. More often than not, either men or young women fill this position, in my experience it was more often men. Since the individual undertaking this job is not hidden behind a wall and the customer contact is much more direct, the role is about controlling customers as opposed to serving them.

On leaving reception and turning right you enter the area dominated by the children's jungle and, further on round, four pool tables and the customer service desk. Once again in support of popular stereotypes, both the desk and children's play area were run by women on every visit. A woman in a receptionist's uniform always ran the customer services desk (although as I noticed

later, the uniform was the same for all office-based staff) and usually a female attendant was on the play area.

Taking a moment to observe the comings and goings in this space, I often sit on the blue chairs beside the children's play area. Always great screams of euphoria would break the silence as children found new ways to clamber over the equipment, or occasionally the sound of pool balls bouncing off tables further down the hallway could be heard. Every now and again, a tannoy would announce that attendants were required in dry change, over on the skating area or another area. Aside from the attendants who passed by⁴ this area, various men walk by in suits, moving by at least once every 15 minutes. The men in suits around here wear name badges, their names printed in full. In contrast, the receptionists, attendants and administrators only have their first names written. Such a sign of positional power is clearly a way of delineating between individuals hierarchically. The impression provided from these observation periods is that the men in suits are in charge of the shopfloor because they have their full name on the badges and the women in blue appear to deal with customers rather than attendants.

The customer service desk is open, in contrast to the bullet-proof glass housing receptionists in the front area. The reception is entered through a door at the back, which is constantly kept locked. The kinds of disputes settled in here involve: the failure of the food and drinks machines to provide goods or return money; problems with toilets are reported, or changes in programmes are explained as well as a host of other general inquiries.

No matter how long I sit in a blue chair (an hour and a half on one occasion as I waited for an attendant to be released from his shift to talk to me) it is extremely difficult to gauge how many staff work in the centre. It did seem, however, as if there are more women working than men although the way men walk around, invariably with a file in their hands, and other staff defer to

⁴ I discovered that being deployed on the concourse area was one of the LAs most favourite tasks because of the freedom it allowed - they could walk anywhere around the centre and were rarely checked upon. It was also easy to disappear when in this position as there was no set place to be.

them, it appears as if they are in control. Further evidence for this is provided when it is a woman in blue who fetches a suited man for irate customers whom no-one else could placate.

Walking through the centre some very clear patterns emerge which challenge management's belief that anyone can do any job. The practicalities of organisational life appear to obscure the principle outlined by one manager:

Barbara (Senior Management)

"I believe and live the principle of hey, everybody can do everything, I can go and stand on pool side the same way as an attendant can, an attendant can erm, ... they can work out certain sets of figures exactly the same way as I can, they can complete the training records that I completed yesterday the same as I can, so we are firm believers in everybody can do everything."

The formal organisation, which appears through company documentation, looks to be under threat. The formal rules, regulations, procedures and processes, set in place to ensure activities are accomplished in predictable ways, are still believed by management to exclude the involvement of personal characteristics. From the outside looking in it appears that this is not the case at Past Times as further data, gained from other observations and interviews provide greater insights to the real dynamics under-pinning the organisational life at Past Times.

MOVING THROUGH PAST TIMES

The formal documentation at Past Times serves to obscure individuals who are influenced by gender, sexuality and the body in the course of their work. The ways in which the formal structures of the organisation are actually taken up and adapted by individuals in the day-to-day course of their working life depend upon the dynamics of gender identities, symbols of gender and gendered interactions. Claims of gender neutrality are maintained through 'impersonal, objectifying practices of organising, managing and controlling any large organisations' (Acker, 1992: 256) which are embedded in organisational processes. One example of this at Past Times is provided above by Barbara, who sees managing and organising as neutral processes. To access the under-pinning gendered sub-text, work processes and practices at Past Times are now unhinged from the dominant discourse, initially through the various signs and symbols across the centre.

SIGNS & SYMBOLS

As a leisure centre, Past Times offers a broad array of sporting opportunities for customers to participate in. Walking into the centre for the first time the starkness of the building is surprising to me. Bare concrete walls adorn the building and very few pictures, posters or any other kind of decoration cover the walls. Alvesson and Due Billing (1997) identified buildings and office interiors as integral to the construction of cultural meanings where blank walls provide an impersonal impression signalling objectivity, neutrality and the suppression of feelings. The decoration of Past Times reflects the same images and feelings, a pattern which Alvesson and Due Billing believe are usually associated with masculinity. Even before you have walked far into the centre a particular, masculine tone is already set against which female receptionists, restricted behind a screen, are positioned.

Against the starkness of the centre, the blue skirt suits in reception stand out, as do the red uniform of attendants as you walk through the turnstile. The different norms prescribing dress between the reception and attendants are therefore highly visible.

Uniform

As one interpretation of the formal organisational logic lays out, there are clear lines of demarcation between men and women's uniform in the offices. The adoption of corporate uniform, serves to express shared meanings, in particular the differentiation between male and female staff (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997; McDowell, 1997). At Past Times this differentiation is written into employment contracts:

Barry (Senior Management)
"it is a condition of our service that we follow the uniform code"

Further support is provided to these conditions by the lack of challenge from female staff wishing to wear trousers, or vice versa. Over time the gym skirts which female leisure attendants (LAs) wore on the shopfloor have been replaced with shorts, but since these were already part of the

uniform code there was no conflict with the rules and regulations. Cockburn (1991) in a study of a large retail organisation found that variances in uniform concurred with differences in behaviour. At Past Times the only difference is that you often see women in blue chatting together, or men in suits with one or two men in red uniforms, but I have not seen much mixing between the women in red and blue uniforms. Common to all staff is the strict enforcement of uniform regulations, the avoidance of which will result in warnings and ultimately dismissal.

Filby (1992) and Adkins (1995), in their respective studies of the betting and hospitality industries, both found the sexual commodification of women through the enforcement of gender specific uniforms. In both these instances the differences between men and women's outfits was considerable, with the women in the betting shops having to wear short skirts and for bar work being forced to wear dresses off the shoulders. These kinds of links between the sexualisation of female workers and the control of their uniforms did not occur at Past Times.

The positioning of male bodies in blue trouser suits is perceived as standard male dress across the corporate world and promotes a male body separate from both nature and sexuality (McDowell, 1997). In a study of financial institutions across the City, McDowell (1997) discovered that the colour and style of suits were used to evaluate individuals and the kind of advice they provided. At Past Times both the style and colour are standardised which controls bodily performances. McDowell found that differentiation adopted by men occurred through the colour of their socks and kinds of braces worn. Even this level of individuality was written out at Past Times through strict adherence to the regulations which dictated black socks, such an approach indicates the enforcement of one particular, single corporate masculine identity as opposed to a less structured approach where more varied forms could emerge. This particular way of positioning the male body within the top of an organisational hierarchy shows how it is disciplined. Frank (1991) identified a 'disciplined' body as one which was highly controlled and isolated, which occurs at Past Times.

Uniforms can also operate in the dimension of keeping the personal private on social occasions out of work. In the context of Past Times the management draw upon this by arriving in their uniform to any socials they attend. This act distributes multiple messages. It directly brings work to the social event but retains the authority the individual embodies at work outside the boundaries of work and emphasises the corporate image. It also sets out the boundaries with regard to personal space, suggesting the individual's space is policed and the personal is being kept private.

Other Symbols and Signs

Personal artefacts of family life distributed around the office are a further way in which management's masculine identity is traditionally protected and perpetuated (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997; McDowell, 1997; Spain, 1992). At Past Times I only went into the two senior managers' offices, in which there were no such visible items. This portrays a very neutral setting, one where the personal is externalised. Such an environment reflects masculine values (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997) and contributes to a singular construction of corporate masculinity.

At Past Times the most obvious signs and symbols which, within the context of this study, contribute to the construction of gender emerge from the uniform, the lack of decoration around the centre and the absence of personal effects in offices. These factors contribute to the particular construction of masculinity, within which femininity is also reduced to a singular representation. Other ways in which this occurs or is contested are now examined through the theme of interactions.

INTERACTIONS

Interactions occur on a daily basis between women and men, men and men, and women and women through which various patterns of dominance and subordination, marginalisation or complicity, are constructed, re-constructed or challenged. At Past Times immediately obvious is the ways in which space is involved in the demarcation of gendered interactions. Space acts

both as a restriction on and release of interactions, and serves to hide or display particular manifestations of gendered interactions. Secondly, the interactions, which occur around the allocation of work, are integral to both the perpetuation and dispute of gendered power relations.

SPACE

Spain (1992) found, across a multiple of cases, an inter-relation of gender, space and status. Institutionalised spaces form barriers to the gendered acquisition of knowledge by assigning women and men to different locales. Masculine spaces contain socially valued knowledge, for example maths, science and rationality, while conversely feminine spaces consist of devalued knowledge such as child care, cleaning, verbal and relationship skills (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997). Depending on where the space is it can also provide signs about class divisions. Spatial segregation is a mechanism by which one group with greater power can maintain power or build up more. This is achieved through control over access to resources and knowledge through the monitoring of space (Spain, 1992). Explored next are the ways in which patterns of segregation emerge and contribute to the ongoing construction of men and women as separate within Past Times.

For a relationship between status and space to develop, there must be constant production and reproduction of the boundaries (Spain, 1992). Walking through the barrier and seeing (during the week) more men wandering around than women reinforces this divide, which is not a true reflection of overall employment figures. In total 92 women and 81 men work at the centre. This impression of occupation of space by more men is a result of the different distribution of men and women across the hierarchy and across full-time, part-time and casual positions. The variance in visibility of staff is examined across the different levels.

Now You see Them, Now You Don't – The Paradox of Management's Space

The changes both as part of Compulsive Competitive Tendering (CCT) and because of changing economic circumstances are altering the management experience within the public services

(Stewart & Walsh, 1992). Promotion based upon time served is outdated and has been replaced by annual targets, tight budgets and promotion on merit. This change in orientation has been coupled by the move of women into management at Past Times. Traditionally the move towards more rigid financial goals is perceived as closing the territory off to men, where competition is a definer of masculinity (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997). This move over to tighter management control has been paralleled with management's forced withdrawal from the shopfloor as meetings and paperwork require greater attention. Although system changes have compelled management to move away from being visible, shopfloor staff would rather blame the increase in women for this alteration. Managers are marked by their absence from the shopfloor and when they are available staff treat them with suspicion, as the following attendant describes:

Elise (Shopfloor)

"they are sort of like watching ya, big bosses standing round the corner. They spy on ya, they do, they do actually spy on ya. I have seen management spy on ya, they sort of look round corners"

Combined with being a senior manager at the top of the organisational hierarchy is autonomy in the use of space. Senior managers have unrestricted use of space both within the centre and outside. Access to particular areas is one way in which a group with an advantage, senior managers, can maintain their power (Spain, 1992). McDowell (1997) argues that abstract spaces of power are bound up with practices of power. Across financial institutions in London McDowell found that daily and longer-term interactions reinforce dominant meanings to abstract spaces. At Past Times definition of space is an ongoing wrestle between management and the shopfloor.

Right now, the change in strategic direction of the centre and preparation for the tendering process is taking senior management away from the centre. This therefore makes them more visible than ever when they do appear on the shopfloor. Although senior management are aware that they need to be seen around by their staff, when they are 'in' the accessibility of their offices is limited. For the majority of management, offices are located up away from the main customer areas and a keypad lock protects the doors. Anyone wishing to access the centre manager must first bypass her secretary. This separation of management offices reconfirms who has access to control over knowledge, privacy and information and who does not.

In contrast to the two senior managers' freedom, lower managers are not seen around the centre, unless they are covering duty manager responsibilities, and remain restricted to their desks up above the sports facilities. The male duty managers are the only staff who, when they are working in the centre, experience a large amount of freedom because the majority of their job involves checking up on staff and offering customer support. Those experiencing the most amount of direct restriction of movement are the shopfloor staff.

DMs are the face of management on the shopfloor, responsible for its smooth running and customer issues. DM's presence on the shopfloor is demanded because of the abolition of a duty officer role 18 months previously:

Barbara (Senior management)

"I eliminated that. It (DO position) was so that the DM could sit in their office and do nothing erm while the DO was on the desk, so now we have the DM on the desk. ... And these are the ones that we are trying to eek out, yeah, I mean there are I have done time and motion exercises with people where people have found it impossible to fill 37 hours a week and I am asking the question so what are you doing the rest of the time, you know that they have only got 19 hours worth of work accounted for"

The removal of the duty officer position was meant to make the DMs a much more 'hands on' role. In this way, some of their positional authority has been taken away because they are now much closer to the LAs. This change in status impacts their masculine identity and the DMs strive to find alternative ways of maintaining a form of masculinity which differentiates them from other men on the shopfloor. Strategies central to this masculinity include the denial of managerial authority, reliving of history through folklore but the most important is the continual public rebuttal of senior management authority.

The DMs are now the hinge between customer and staff, therefore they should be more visible than before. In practice, they remain invisible. They now use the canteen, bowling area, ticket office by the bowling area and other spaces to 'do paperwork'. DM's achieve this level of invisibility through a combination of their long history at the centre, in-depth knowledge of the layout, their authority on the shopfloor and lack of respect for senior managers. During many interviews, staff made many references to the ability of DMs to disappear from the shopfloor under the guise of achieving paperwork.

Based upon the DM's dissent from senior management is an emerging counter-culture. This is founded upon a masculinity characterised by conflict with management, authoritarian ruling of the shopfloor, dependence upon historical knowledge and experience, and rejection of organisational changes. Some elements of this particular construction of masculinity are similar to those labelled by Collinson and Hearn (1997) among managers as 'authoritarianism'. They based this upon bullying and the creation of fear in subordinates, however at Past Times there are other more subtle elements to this form of masculinity. Some of these elements are shared by certain sub-sections of the attendants, in particular the SLAs.

The Locker Room

At an attendant level, both senior and general levels, employees are allocated to positions by DMs where they must remain until they are relieved from their duty by another member of staff. Most of the positions in the centre demand that staff remain stationary for the duration of the session. On poolside, this can be up to 3 or 4 hours long with a 10 minute break usually every half an hour. Attendants are therefore the most rigorously controlled staff at Past Times.

Gendered strategies for avoiding this control while on duty at Past Times contribute to the reproduction of gender power relations on the shopfloor. Critical to these methods are good working and, for some, social relationships between male LAs and SLAs. The locker room, or staff room, is central to these gender power relations.

One position on the shopfloor allows a great deal of roaming and, for some staff, the use of some hiding areas to disappear from all managers. For the LAs this is the concourse position where you can wander around and find places to sit, which compared to the positions on the poolside, ice rink or in the skate shop, is unrestricted:

Elvis (Shopfloor)

"if you are wandering on concourse that is a better job, a job where you are sitting instead of standing on pool side, that is a bit better job."

Those individuals who gain the most access to this benefit are the full-time male attendants because they spend the largest amount of time working with DMs allocating staff to the various positions. There are greater opportunities to interact with customers on the concourse, which adds to the variety of experiences while on shift and helps time pass faster. The relationships between attendants and DMs, who allocate staff to positions, are integral to the positioning of staff across the centre and the opportunity for relationships to be built upon. Spain (1992) found that limited access to space generates shared knowledge for the dominant group. In turn this creates a group identity. In this particular example, the shared knowledge about where to hide contributes to male attendants' own form of masculinity, constructed in opposition to a corporate identity.

The option for staff to disappear from the shopfloor, apart from when working on the concourse, lies in the staff room. The locker room is conceptualised as 'free space' by management, available to all staff for breaks during work hours. It was clear from visiting the staff room that it was not in constant use. On each of the five visits I made to the staff room, every time there were dirty plates on the table and side, the microwave was filthy and it smelt of cigarettes.

The room is located up a cold set of concrete stairs, above the ice rink and tucked well away from the public eye. The room is dirty and unattractive with walls of exposed concrete breezeblocks. Two tables and approximately 9 basic chairs occupy the centre of the room. At one end a dirty sink, supported by a set of cupboards, stands beside a drinks and food machine. On top of the side are a kettle and a microwave. Two locked wall cabinets house notices. A barely used notice board reflects the overall lack of care and attention. Clearly, no attempts have been made to make the room attractive or welcoming. Two attendants describe it:

Elizabeth (Shopfloor)

"it is not a very pleasant facility really, it is a crappy little scruffy room and people don't look after it and people can't even be bothered to wash a plate up afterwards, take food up there, don't wash it and they don't clean it up so it is a big mess, not very nice."

Ethel (Shopfloor)

"it can be quite a tip like because a lot of people don't clean it up, there is always notices up it is your rubbish take it away type of thing, but they don't."

Administrative staff, receptionists, management and the cleaners, all predominantly female, never use the staff room. This is partially because there are alternative areas allocated, all of which are smaller and serve alternative purposes⁵, but secondly and more critically because these staff feel threatened in the staff room. Female and older male shopfloor staff discuss how they would rather put their sweatshirt on and either stay in the canteen or leave the centre than use the staff room (it is a condition of service that they cover their shirts if not on duty). Such dominance of space across time remains unchecked, because the male attendants ruling the locker room are very friendly with senior attendants and duty managers, the two direct line managers.

The threatening behaviour is from a small group of full-time attendants, identified as the 'lads'. It is a group of male attendants aged between 19 and 30 years old who, through a variety of strategies, make most people, in particular women, unwelcome. Although breaks for attendants are quite short, (15 minutes), and change-overs are not always on time, the 'real' time the lads are in occupancy should only be up to 45 minutes during an entire shift of 8 hours⁶. This could add up to over an hour with avoidance strategies and when deadlines are ignored. These attendants boasted about doing, since their good relationship with the SLAs and DMs meant nothing is ever said to them.

The following excerpt gives an insight as to the strategies these attendants adopt to dominate the space:

Eldon (Shopfloor)

"I mean if you are like sitting in the staff room sort of thing having a good crack on and what have you, you will be sitting getting something and I will start aiming at you, you know what I mean. Carrying on what have you and some of the lasses say I am scared to leave here in case you start shouting me. There is nothing in it, it is a daft level. Sort of like if anyone is giving you a hard time you have got to give them a hard time back to make sure you can take it."

The extent of these lads spatial dominance is encapsulated within one female manager's description of visits to this room. As a long-term employee, she used to spend a lot of time in the

⁵ Cleaners use a cupboard where they keep their equipment, administrative staff use the canteen and receptionists tend not to have breaks.

⁶ Data was provided by the management about working time and hours.

staff room. Now, however, she finds it difficult returning despite now, theoretically, being in a position of greater authority:

Celia (Lower Management)

"That was really the freakiest feeling because I have worked here so long and I used to like get butterflies in my stomach if I had to go in the staff room, you know, I thought it was really weird that feeling because I used to be that person in that staff room with all the crack and everything, then when I was working along there this isolation feeling came and I thought eee I have to walk into the staff room."

In particular older female attendants who have worked at Past Times since it opened say that they refuse to use it because they just receive verbal abuse any time they are in there⁷. Symbolically the staff room represented free space where the lads can demonstrate their masculinity through the domination of space and time - since they still dominate it even when they are not there by the mess they leave, and attendants in there not knowing when they could appear.

While the lads demonstrate their masculinity through their behaviour and allocation of space, there is also an element of working class identity operating through the concept of lads. This is very similar to that discovered by Willis (1977) in his analysis of working class culture in schools. The ways in which the lads behave celebrates their working class culture and contributes an element to the construction of their fragmented identities. An integral part of this culture is the joking and laughing at women, elements which confirm their primary status as male and secondary as working class males.

Willis' (1977) analysis of school counter culture shows how intimidatory joking are critical elements in the creation of the 'lads' oppositional culture. Their male identity is established through an alternative definition of success to the dominant value system and freedom is experienced through 'wagging off', 'dossing' or having a laff'. In particular, Willis found that 'having a laff' is a 'multi-faceted implement of extraordinary importance in the counter-school culture' (1977; p. 29) which is very similar to the lads at Past Times. Laughing at intruders to the staff room, particularly women, is a defining aspect of group identity. This particular identity celebrates their manual work and vilifies the passive, mental work of management.

⁷ This data was recorded from observations in the field notes.

Collinson (1992) discovered how humour was used as a way of assessing whether new entrants are 'man enough' to be accepted into a masculine sub-culture. Collinson and Hearn (1996) identify honesty, independence and authenticity as key characteristics in the construction of masculinity on the shopfloor. Another part of this form of masculinity was the avoidance of promotion since this would mean compromising their sense of freedom and independence. The 'lads' at Past Times encapsulate most of these features. In complete contrast to a masculine sub-culture, the concentration of women in the reception area simultaneously contributes to the same gendered power dynamics.

The Powder Room

Upon entering the centre it is immediately clear that the receptionists are confined to a very small, highly visible area, the entry and exit to which is heavily policed. The significance of such spatial segregation, because of the dominance of female bodies serving the public, is to reinforce the notion of job segregation in the centre (Spain, 1992). This provides an insight to one aspect of stereotypical expectations governing men and women's roles in the organisation. The receptionists, predominantly women, are there to serve, to communicate effectively with the public while isolated from further interactions with others through their confinement, in what they call, the 'goldfish bowl'. Erica, a receptionist, speaks to this point.

Erica (Shopfloor)

"It isn't too bad, it is OK. Sometimes you feel like you are a gold fish in a bowl because everybody is looking at you"

The name arises from the design of the area which is composed of bullet proof glass from the waist up. The notion of the goldfish bowl is not unlike Foucault's (1977) notion of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon, the circular prison where relations of power and subjection were produced and reproduced. The effect of a circular design was that disciplinary measures are based on a surveillance system where everyone is their own surveyor because they never know at what point others are watching them. Receptionists have to deal with the unknown observer and the

continuous surveillance of the customer, who, as the front line of the organisation, they must impress on first acquaintances to achieve the goals of Past Times.

Alternatively, while the label of 'goldfish' bowl sums up their complete visibility, the 'powder room' speaks to the gendered nature of this element of work at Past Times. Receptionists, telephonists and duty cashiers must always be on their best behaviour because they are the public faces of the centre. Conversely, these women are in the most dangerous positions since they are literally the front line of defence for any robberies⁸. Restriction of movement is within this area, despite very long shifts:

Dawn (Shopfloor 1)

"one day last week couldn't get me lunch until half 2 and I started at 8 o'clock and it was far too long - we don't get an official break, not allowed a cuppa, you know if you are serving or doing your job I do try ... the shifts some of them are crappy you know, 2 to 10 and 10 hour shifts are a long time your 8 till 6s are long, you know who devised the shifts like ... sitting there, it is very very hard, same like I do me 2 till 10 tonight you straight on at 8 o'clock to 6 tomorrow, a late and an early that is hard but I don't mind"

Apart from the main area where the five receptionists, one telephonist and duty cashier sit, there is a very small back room where receptionists are allowed to have a cup of coffee. Under no circumstances can staff be seen with coffee or food in the reception area⁹. Breaks are heavily monitored and a coffee in the back room is only allowed when it is quiet. One receptionist describes how they 'don't have to ask to go to the loo', other than that they have to ask to do anything else. They are bound by the customer, the telephone and the fact that management (from within or those in Leisure Services or City Services) can appear at any moment.

Confinement to the powder room limits these employees, through the control of spatial boundaries, in three ways. They cannot interact with other staff, their work is highly visible and their access to knowledge is limited considerably. The status accorded to the receptionists confined in this area, as interpreted by them, is low in the centre:

Dawn (Shopfloor 1)

"it is sort of like we are the under dogs in there but we are the first port of call. You are front line"

⁸ One had occurred two weeks before the research began.

⁹ Notes from field notes.

Related to the historical split between public-private, Spain (1992) argues that the confinement of women to particular areas reinforce status differentiation. In this situation, women are aligned with being good communicators. The concentration of receptionists across the bottom of the organisational hierarchy¹⁰ and employment of all receptionists, except two, on a part-time or casual basis indicates that their knowledge is not highly valued. The restriction of receptionists to the goldfish bowl creates a dominant feminine identity, where knowledge of communication and personnel skills are associated with the job and women predominate in the job. In some ways the construction of women workers as receptionists is similar to that of women in customer care work at a hotel and leisure park examined by Adkins (1995).

Adkins (1995) discovered that certain elements of work operated only in relation to women which suggested that women played a gender specific role in people work at each site. Women staff at each location had to look good in appearance while men were not subject to the same requirements. This particular aspect of work, as at Past Times, is closely connected to profit through the encouragement of customers to enter the centre, thereby increasing sales. Receptionists can also sell other services to raise income, such as special events, coaching and classes¹¹. Other shopfloor staff do not have the same opportunities to contribute to this accumulation of revenue. The regulation and control of receptionists' behaviour, appearance and location in the powder room are all constructed in relation to their gender.

The concentration of women in the powder room, combined with the lack of value¹² attached to their most visible tasks (meeting and greeting), serve to express a logic of gendered power relations between the receptionists and other groups in the centre. This becomes a tool in the reproduction of the broader gender order. Spain (1992) argues that in similar situations a reciprocal relationship between status and space thus becomes institutionalised so that freedom of movement represents improved position within the centre. To this end, those entering the

¹⁰ Management chart and staff data was provided by the Manager.

¹¹ The receptionists talked about the broad array of tasks in their job during interviews.

¹² Value in terms of both the economic income they earn (lowest of staff in the centre) and location in the organisational hierarchy - which is on the bottom rung.

reception are closely monitored through a keyhole in the door, and any strangers are directed to the windows to conduct their business.

Halford, Savage and Witz (1997), in an analysis of banking, discovered a new emphasis on accessibility and visibility in a bid to encourage new customers in and more money from old customers. Integral in their strategy is the placement of women in these receptionist/front line positions. In similar ways to the betting, hotel, leisure park and banking industries, the management at Past Times construct female workers in different ways to male workers. Characteristics, for example inter-personal skills and a pleasant physical appearance, are essential parts of this construction. These characteristics are traditionally perceived as feminine (Adkins, 1995; Filby, 1992; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1997; McDowell, 1997). These are in direct contrast to highly valued 'masculine' skills (such as rationality, decision making) which tend to be considered the domain of men (Adkins, 1995; Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997).

The reception, because of its position on the front line plays an important part in the confirmation of popular stereotypes, mainly that women are good at serving. Overlooked are the other tasks that form integral parts of the job and which become invisible within the popular stereotype of the job. A telephonist¹³ deals with all bookings between 9 am and 5.00 p.m. as well as a buzzer to the external door to be answered; there is lost property to be dealt with, the leasing of sporting equipment, customer enquiries and the need for swift transactions of money. As the following respondent outlines, there is rarely a quiet moment in reception:

Erla (Shopfloor)

"Reception is where it all happens ... you have got like a lot of noise going on, telephones are there, tannoy systems, people if they need change, or any kind of tokens, or key, we have all the keys in reception so it is a very busy area at all times. Even if it is not the customer coming in you still have other things to do ... we have also got a bookings line into reception so that phone is ringing at all times of the day. That starts at a quarter to 9 in the morning and finishes at 9.30 on the evening. So that is ringing all day."

As 'front line' staff, the receptionists have to be able to deal with more surprises than most members of staff. This was demonstrated earlier in the year when armed robbers attempted to break into the centre. The bullet proof glass offers one level of protection, but this cannot prepare

¹³ The head receptionist provided this data in an interview.

the receptionists for the real horrors of such an attack. At Past Times the screen provides protection to staff from closer interactions with customers and restricts sexual joking and innuendoes which is often an enforced part of the 'servicers' role (McDowell, 1997; Pringle, 1992; Truss, 1993).

The role of the receptionist also suffers from being under valued at Past Times, in similar ways to Filby's (1992) female cashiers in betting. Filby found that the mathematical and technical work the cashiers undertake is saturated with social aspects from which the core identity for cashiers is taken. This, he claims, is because women dominate these positions and their technical ability contradicts the gendered nature of knowledge. Similarly at Past Times the receptionists must handle cash quickly and accurately while simultaneously operating the complex tills, yet these aspects of their job become invisible. By highlighting the social aspects of reception work, elements which are considered inherent to women (Acker, 1992; Adkins, 1995; Cockburn, 1991; McDowell, 1997; Pringle, 1989), the job can continue to be under-valued so long as women outnumber men in the position. The job then continues to be associated with a femininity built upon characteristics closely aligned to women's position in the home, that of caring, supportive and communication. A femininity which is limiting for all women and a large number of men.

Summary

The acquisition of space across Past Times contributes to the construction of various masculinities and femininities through the restriction of space, visibility and invisibility. The restriction of space operates as one mechanism by which access to resources and knowledge are monitored. Pertinent to the reproduction of gendered relations is the role of DMs in allocation of attendants and their preferential treatment for those male attendants embodying masculine characteristics. The subordination of receptionists, a female dominated position, is demonstrated through two dynamics. Receptionist's confinement to the powder room and the invisibility of certain elements of their work which contradicts the gendered nature of knowledge both contribute

to the perpetuation of a group identity. Although theoretically such knowledge and experience is available to all staff, in reality it is not.

The various interacting spatial barriers across Past Times have all become, over time, established to reproduce a particular gender order on the shop floor and across management. These barriers then maintain various dynamics of advantage and disadvantage (Spain, 1992). These spatial arrangements offer one perspective of the ways in which gendered differences are constructed and legitimated at Past Times. Now other ways in which gender power relations are reproduced or challenged by staff at Past Times are examined through the theme of social relations.

SOCIAL RELATIONS

The majority of gendered relations among staff are built up through the daily interactions occurring on the shopfloor. Analysis of these relations provides insights to the ways in which various networks are constructed and reproduced or sometimes challenged. At Past Times the opportunities for the constitution of what are termed 'normal' relations are stunted by the shift patterns of work and the increasingly growing reliance on a temporary workforce. As revealed above, the spatial restrictions operating at all levels of position affect the possibilities for change in gender power relations at Past Times. The focus now is on how policies¹⁴ and practices impact the construction and reproduction of gendered relations, both among staff and between staff and customers.

Past Times exists to provide a service to the public. Falling within the service sector, customers at Past Times are integral to the ongoing reproduction of gender power relations through the construction of work (Adkins, 1992; McDowell, 1997). The nature of service work means that part of the product being sold is the relation between the customer and the server (Adkins, 1992). This implies that the cultural expectations of the customer influence the nature of interactions and ultimately the construction of power relations. Historically women have dominated service jobs

¹⁴ All policy information was collected at the beginning of the research from the secretary to the Manager.

where the prerequisites have been strong inter-personal skills. Examination of customers provides insights to their expectations of service and the impact this has on the construction of gender power relations within the centre. Equally important to the ongoing dynamics of gender relations are the various ways in which men and women support or contest each other in day to day organisational life. Examination of these relations forms the final part of this section.

'Acting Up': The Selection of Shopfloor Staff

As part of the DMs' direct control over the running of the shopfloor, they have the power to determine which LAs 'act up' into the SLA position. Acting up involves taking on the extra responsibilities of that position for a particular shift. In these instances the LA is paid the difference in hourly rate and takes on extra shift responsibilities. These include customer complaints, LA queries and support, covering for LAs and LA control. To fulfil this position the LA should have been on additional first aid courses and be more experienced in the role. More often than not, acting up SLAs are required at the weekend, because the five full-time SLAs do not always want to work these extra shifts.

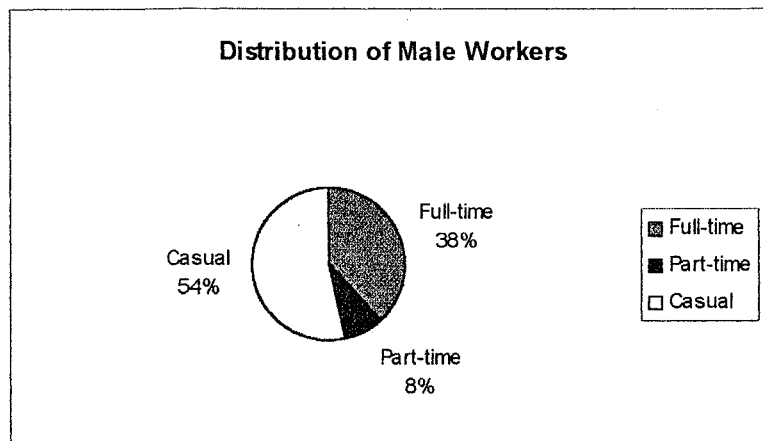
The acting up SLA is critical for the reproduction of gender power relations on the shopfloor. This is because on the one hand, the DM must know the individual well enough to be comfortable placing the extra responsibility on them. To know the LA well they must have worked at the centre for a reasonable amount of time and be seen to have the appropriate experience. Secondly, the choice of the SLA to act up depends to a certain extent on the amount of training a LA has benefited from. Access to training is monitored by the DMs, thus their choices are instrumental in the opportunity to act up. Subsequently an individual who has not worked for long at Past Times is unlikely to be able to act up for a while. Those members of staff who have this experience tend to be male. A female LA describes how the relationship between SLAs and DMs marginalises some members of staff:

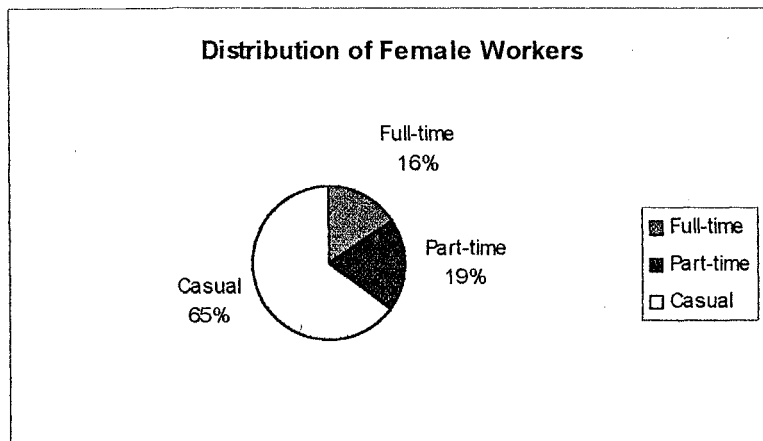
Elise (Shopfloor)

"I think there might be a bit of favouritism towards some of the staff, the senior staff that have been here a long time and they, between the DMs and the Seniors. I think some of the senior attendants think they deserve a better deal than everyone else, if you know what I mean and they might kick up a fuss if they don't get their shift then and do this then whatever."

One consequence of the move over to a casual workforce is that more authority falls to DMs on staffing issues. Since the majority of full-time LAs and all the SLAs are male they benefit from greater opportunities to work with these individuals and for each party to gain trust and respect. This directly effects decisions on staffing - the individual in charge of filling the rotas stated, off the record, that he would always rather have a man in charge because "at least he can trust them". He showed me some rosters where he had purposefully pulled in a male casual onto a shift to act up into the SLA position rather than putting up a female who was already rostered. The distribution of men and women across Past Times supports these dynamics.

At Past Times the increase of women into the burgeoning areas of part-time, temporary and casual contracts is similar to that in service industries in general (Adkins, 1995; Filby, 1994). Women constitute 36% of the full-time work force in Past Times yet dominate the part-time and casual workers by 80% and 62% respectively. Twenty four percent of women work part-time as opposed to 8% of men, while 38% of men work full-time compared to 15% of women. These figures are more clearly represented in the charts below:





The move towards a higher concentration of casual staff places the onus on the worker to look after themselves rather than the organisation (Reskin & Padavic, 1994; Labour Market Trends, 1999). In particular pension costs, holiday pay, maternity leave, national insurance contributions are just some of the extra expenses Past Times can avoid by using a large casual work force. The proposed benefit of casual work is that it provides employees with a different kind of lifestyle and greater access to freedom and, instead of job security encounter 'employability' through broader work experiences (Labour Market Trends, 1999).

Casual workers also experience limited benefits in terms of holiday and sick pay and at Past Times do not benefit from an active union to pursue their rights. Acker (1990) claims that very often organisational changes can have unforeseen impacts upon groups of workers. CCT, as a result of demanding greater economic effectiveness has resulted in a situation where women lose out as they are predominantly in part-time and casual positions which suffer from lack of institutional support, access to over time and cumulatively impact pensions, holiday and sick pay.

This situation reflects the ongoing protection of a form of masculinity by the DMs. A large part of men's masculinity and power is embodied in their work role and since the DMs are, as lower managers, distanced from the strategic element of management, they pursue other ways of retaining a form of masculinity. Central to the ongoing construction of difference is networking among particular men on the shopfloor. The form of an 'old boys network' occurring on the

shopfloor retains close links between long serving attendants and marks them out as different from the rest of staff.

The benefits to the male full-time shopfloor staff of such networking between DMs, SLAs and LAs are twofold. On the one hand they have greater choice of position on duty, or at least an attempt at negotiation of this, and secondly male full time LAs have the chance to take longer breaks without censure. The two dynamics operating to close all women and some men out from experiencing a broader variety of the job is first the processes governing selection onto a shift, and secondly, the distribution of individuals across a shift. These are policed by the DMs in their day-to-day management practices.

The DMs and SLAs are similar to Collinson's (1992) shopfloor workers who perceive office workers as 'twats and nancy boys' (p. 87). The informal action on the shopfloor extends to protect knowledge from being shared with those outside of their loop, i.e. all the women and some of the men, particularly older male members of staff. The introduction of awards like Investors in People (IIP) and ISO9000 is forcing all processes and system to be committed to paper. This may, in the future, make knowledge about practices in the centre more public. In the current economic climate however, with no promotion occurring, the likelihood of this impacting on the relations between men and women is minimal. Senior managers are aware of the need for greater distribution of knowledge from the shopfloor, as the following quote indicates:

Barbara (Senior Management)

"If those procedures weren't written down and formalised they (shopfloor managers) would have all of that knowledge in their heads, they can share it with whoever they like, they can pass it on to the lads and deliberately bypass the women as the old boys network works, I mean we know how it works in football, we know how it works in golf clubs so I guess thinking about it then yeah because it means that everything is accessible to everybody, I mean the ISO strap line is get everything right first time, every time, now the only way you can do that is if everything is accessible to everybody."

The control of relations on the shopfloor is one aspect of the way in which masculinity is constructed through workplace relations for the DMs and SLAs. Overall, the DMs are critical in the ongoing reproduction or transformation of gender power relations because of their pivotal role

in the organisation. I now turn to the ways in which they can operate independently of the managers located in the offices and further affect the construction of gender power relations.

Upstairs-Downstairs: Management Relations

Customer satisfaction is a priority for the management at Past Times, particularly in the face of increased competition at the forthcoming tender and secondly from other local, privately operated gyms. To this end, various management strategies had been adopted to increase the effectiveness of customer service. One approach involved re-organising the management on the shopfloor as raised in 'Now you see them, now you don't'.

The dissolution of the duty officer position¹⁵ places the DMs in a more visible and theoretically practical role. The combination of the two roles reduces the status of the DM position in many ways, particularly by placing them on the front line of the centre in a more 'hands on' customer service position. This further differentiates them from the senior managers who are drawn away from the shopfloor more now than at any other time because of the strategic direction of the centre.

One of the ways in which DMs can avoid this dilution of their role is to allocate more responsibility to the SLAs indirectly and still retain a distance from the shopfloor. Further more, they can evade (and do) filling out appropriate forms and following up queries over weekends and evenings, passing them on to senior managers. This causes friction between themselves and management, as the following illustrates:

Ben (Senior Management)

"my personal opinion is that the DMs that are dedicated to don't want to get involved in having to sort out the problems with the customers, they just write up customer complaint forms and pass it on. Although there has been effort to try and restrict that and say look, try and sort it out there and then it doesn't happen. And if there is a customer comment there is not enough in the way of a report that is coming back. They should be interviewing the staff there and then coming back, so basically it doesn't have to come back"

¹⁵ The manager of the centre discussed the dissolution of the duty officer position in our second meeting.

This avoidance strategy is one part of a construction of masculinity, through which DMs distance themselves from both their work load and management. Other ways in which the DMs subvert management authority include failing to file shift reports, or submitting skeletal ones, avoiding meetings or going to higher authorities with complaints. The less amount of information committed to paper the less control the senior management has over day to day activities in the centre. A further way in which they distance themselves from those aspects of work they consider feminine is by calling upon female managers at weekends. This is an alternative to examining the problem themselves:

Belinda (Senior Management)

"majority it is like DMs on a weekend [ringing me up]. They say oh they have come in to sort this out and I can't find it any paper work anywhere, yeah right, well have you got anything, no, well do you know where I can find it, no I am at home, I don't know where it is, ah right, are you coming in at all today? You know it is like, it is, majority it is just daft little things, somebody wants to talk to you, can you contact such and such at home they have got a query about the booking, can it wait until Monday, well they are a bit desperate, ... the phone call at home you haven't got, you know they requested an OHP and screen, you haven't put it on your sheet, is it all right if I give them one - you are the DM, you sort it out. You know, make the decision"

This behaviour by the DMs, who are the critical link for senior management with the shopfloor, supports their disruption of management processes in other ways. For instance when they have a personnel problem, rather than talk to the management they take the issue to the ex manager, who is now general manager of the parent organisation. Another example is the DMs telling tales to the general manager about the assistant manager to try and cause friction between these managers. By doing this the DMs and SLAs will gain authority in the eyes of the 'lads' and demonstrate to the senior management that they have no regard for their formal control. A male attendant who had taken early retirement from another industry and worked at Past Times because he enjoyed it explained this to me in an interview. He was shocked at these practices and the ways in which they were joked about on the shopfloor.

These actions re-establish the duty managers outside of the formal organisation and usual regulatory processes. This behaviour is an important element in an ongoing process of differentiation, through which these male managers distinguish themselves from senior management who are perceived as a 'load of women' (off the record comment by a DM). The

implication is that the real management occurs on the shopfloor by the (male) DMs and SLAs, while the senior management disappears.

Cockburn (1983) and Collinson (1992) demonstrate the ways in which men build informal relationships based upon shared values and masculine interests. At Past Times these relationships are founded upon collective transfer of responsibility and allow DMs and to some extent the SLAs to distance themselves from other men and women while consolidating their group solidarity through distrust of senior management. These particular dynamics strengthen the divide between senior management, positing the shop floor management as driving the organisation forward.

While 'Acting Up' and 'Upstairs Downstairs' have demonstrated the strength of male networks at Past Times, 'Sisters are not doing it for themselves' reveals a very different situation among the women staff.

"Sisters are NOT doing it for Themselves"¹⁶

At Past Times solidarity among men, on the shopfloor, emerges as a trend while in contrast there is no such unity across the women. Female staff on the shopfloor readily disassociated themselves from female management and offered little support for each other through the lower ranks.

The concentration of women in casual positions in the reception area removes continuity (i.e. the chances of regular shifts) from working patterns among female staff and as outlined through the concept of space, their location restricts them from regular interaction with attendant staff. The following quote from a female attendant encapsulates the fragmented nature of relations among women:

¹⁶ Adapted from a song by the Eurythmics (Dave Stewart & Annie Lennox)

Elise (Shopfloor)

"I would rather work with a load of fellas than a load of women. I have worked with fellas and a load of women and I would rather work with blokes, less bitchy. Less bitchy. ... Women yeah great to your face but behind your back oooh, back stabbing .. But the fellas look after each other better than what the women do in here. They like watch each other backs. They tend to erm, if they can't be bothered to do anything somebody else will cover for them, I find that a lot and if you say anything sort of like what were you talking about what was that about, do you know. So you have got to be aware of who is in a click and who is not in the click I think as a female member of staff and what you actually say to different people."

There was very little evidence around the centre of women setting up same sex networks to strengthen their position within the centre.

'The Hand That Rocks the Telephone' – The Secretary/Boss Relationship

The concentration of all attendants at the bottom of the organisation chart is clearly unrepresentative of the dynamics within the staff which result in various hierarchies of difference. In a similar fashion the assignment of the clerk/typist at the bottom of Past Times organisational chart fails to reflect her role within various power relations. According to Acker (1990) this location is a reflection of clerks 'place' in the organisational logic, the low level of their responsibilities and job complexity. In practice the reality is very different. The visibility of the manager's clerk/typist brings with it great responsibility and complexity in the management of staff and customers. The labelling of the job as 'clerk/typist' is a long standing local authority standard which trivialises the complexity of tasks and responsibilities involved.

Pringle (1989, 1992) has accomplished a great deal of work on the power relations surrounding secretaries and the way they are nearly always represented in either familial or sexual terms, as wives, mothers, spinster aunts, daughters or mistresses. The positioning of women as subjects in these relations drastically reduces their individual power, placing them always in relation to their bosses within heterosexual relationships. These kinds of power relations are not directly in operation at Past Times because the clerk/typist works for a female manager and because the individual concerned is a great resource for a large number of management staff both personally and officially. While there is no obvious hierarchical relationship between the manager and clerk at Past Times as Pringle found in traditional organisations, there are still varying power relations

operating. The difference in this relationship is that they are dynamic, shifting between the two as the relationship works through different situations.

The physical location of Estelle at the bottom of the hierarchy does not reflect the size of her job or her position as gatekeeper for the manager, yet it reinforces unequal gender power relations by being an untrue reflection of value to power relations in the centre. The invisibility of the clerk/typist and her critical resource to the manager as both professional and personal support mis-represents the extent of her power within the organisation. Her lack of visibility however, does reflect the general trend of women's jobs having less status.

Throughout the discussion around interactions, various elements of masculinities and femininities emerged which are integral to the construction of identities (Connell, 1995; Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997). These identities are dynamic and in a perpetual states of change depending upon the social context, history and individuals involved. Three particular identities, which emerged as important to the reproduction of gender power relations at Past Times, are discussed in the next section.

IDENTITIES

Acker's framework (1990, 1992) considered identities in terms of individual consciousness of dress, choice of work, use of language and presentation of self. At Past Times the importance of identities emerged at a broader, organisational level. The three key identities, which contribute to the maintenance of gender power relations, are organisational, sexual and sporting identities.

ORGANISATIONAL IDENTITY: FROM FAMILIAL TO CORPORATE IDENTITY

Past Times is struggling to cope with the legacy of an organisational identity forged within the confines of local authority security and comfort while simultaneously attempting to build a new image. The new organisational identity has developed from the application of CCT and is

focused upon the creation of a commercial approach which places a greater emphasis on achieving financial objectives rather than social goals (Stewart & Walsh, 1992). The old organisational identity, reliant upon a patriarchal image, was constructed around a full-time staff, overseen by a male manager when targets and budgets were a foreign language. Within this staff could easily avoid their responsibilities, as the following quote illustrates:

Elvis (Shopfloor)

"I mean 10 years ago and that you used to have four or five attendants standing on concourse doing nowt, it was that bad, 100s and 100s of staff, you had one guy just watching the pool tables there and stuff like that, so obviously there has been big improvements, there was, you could get away with doing absolutely nothing all day in here."

During this time individuals paying to use facilities were labelled 'users' rather than customers. Relationships after work were nurtured among male staff and male managers through sporting activities. Attendants who have been there a long time refer to the organisation being 'like a family', an aspect which the next quote speaks to:

Celia (Lower Management)

"It was like a family, even the old women and that could crack on, good camaraderie."

Daniel (SF Senior)

"we used to have five a side tournaments, erm, on the night after work - the management used to join in because one of them used to be semi pro, one of the assistant managers and Sid Smith (the manager) used to be a referee, so they used to join in. ... used to be a bit of food on at the end of it. That was very good, they used to organise staff Christmas dos, New Year dos"

Stories¹⁷ emerging about the past include there were more opportunities to move up the ranks; SLAs have more responsibility as duty officers, DMs had less paperwork and therefore responsibility to management; male staff would play sport together and socialise after work and finally, senior management were highly visible.

The traditional organisational identity, nurtured through sport and social events after work with a male dominated management team is being supplanted by an alternative identity. Within this new era market forces have been brought to bear on the public provision of services (Leach, Stewart and Walsh, 1994). The current economic pressures of CCT focus management's attention on reduction of staff costs since they occupy such a large percent of the budget. The demands of economic efficiency and budget reductions is requiring greater accountability from all

¹⁷ These stories emerged from both interviews with shopfloor staff as well as observations and informal conversations with staff.

management are addressing the issue through assessment of roles and responsibilities as the following quote indicates:

Barbara (Senior Management)

"we reckon that we can save about ¼ million quid by reducing our staff with little or no effect on service because people generate work ...we have eliminated 250 hours of work just like that (click of fingers) in 6 months ... I am a great believer in people being accountable"

This change being implemented by management is a cultural shift but one which can only work if staff and management are working together. The main issue is that management is working towards a new corporate identity, based upon competition and customers. In contrast the old guard, headed up by the DMs, retain the focus upon the old organisational identity predicated upon familiarity, lack of pressure, sport and fun where work was not directed by business goals. One manager outlines her frustration with the shopfloor management:

Barbara (Senior Management)

"I mean I was here until about twenty to seven one night last week with a senior attendant erm of whom I am asking him to, well asking them all, to carry out a series of tasks that they haven't done before but in my opinion are at the same level of responsibility that they are currently operating and they are not happy about it but this is what the business requires. I am not asking anybody to do hours that they are not getting paid for, I am asking the to do something which is different to what they have been doing before but then things change, the business changes"

Lower management distrust senior management for many reasons, but in particular because lower management believe their goals are personal not centre oriented. There is a feeling that these individuals de-humanise the running of the centre and come in to make changes in order to further their own career. A lower level manager comment on this point:

Carter (Lower management)

"Quite a few changes at a high management level where you can suspect where younger people are coming in to make a name for themselves, er to get on to further their role but it can have a direct bearing on someone in my position who if I don't have this job for the rest of my life I am on the scrap heap, totally realistic. It is very demotivating is the word to think that someone can come in and get rid of your job to further their own end and it means very little to them."

The contradiction of a corporate move towards competitiveness, but the higher number of women in management echelons challenges the traditional organisational identity and individuals masculinity lower down the hierarchy. Men working at lower levels of Past Times can no longer draw upon the social and sporting elements of an out-moded organisational identity. The emerging organisational identity is founded upon other characteristics which have been traditionally labelled masculine (such as competition, long hours of work, dedication), but an

acceptance of such elements would move this form of masculinity to be closely aligned with the current 'female dominated' management.

Halford, Savage and Witz (1997) found nurses working within NHS hospitals undergoing similar structural changes felt a shift in ethic from service to business. This resulted in a greater distancing between senior management and the shopfloor where recruitment meant external bodies with a more money oriented approach were being brought aboard. This divide juxtaposed management against the shopfloor instead of working with them, which is very similar to the processes occurring at Past Times. The resistances and challenges raised from the shop floor to these shifts are now examined.

Challenges from the Shopfloor

Staff recount memories from management's attempts to inform them of organisational changes at the start of CCT focussing on the food provided rather than the content of the changes: 'yeah they were really good, we got free tea and coffee, I remember because we don't get anything free these days' (Dean, SF Senior). Staff feel far removed from the machinations of management because they feel safe in the knowledge that any firm winning the contract will need qualified life guards. In relation to this, over the course of this contract day to day practices had varied very little, the major shift being the reduction in full-time staff and extension of part-time, casual workers. This continuity of work runs counter to management's perception that staff can do anything in the 'new' customer oriented culture because the core male, full-time workforce do not wish to move on with what they see as a feminised management. It is perceived as feminised because of the number of positions occupied by women.

By focusing upon a very different organisational reality to the one management are working towards, and by continual referrals to the old days, the core male workforce on the shopfloor try to perpetuate the old, patriarchal organisational culture. Integral to this dynamic are elements of

various sexual identities across the centre. The construction of sexual identities and their role in the constant battle for power is now analysed.

SEXUAL IDENTITY

Since the late 1980s there has been a large increase in the amount of research dedicated to examining sexuality within organisations (Acker, 1992; Adkins, 1995; Filby, 1992; Gherardi, 1995; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1992; Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Hearn et al., 1992; Pringle, 1989, 1992). In this research sexuality is perceived as part of the ongoing production of gender and crucial to the organisational gender order (Acker, 1992; Halford, Savage & Witz, 1992; Hearn et al, 1992). At Past Times sexual identities emerged across a range of themes as being central in the reproduction of gendered relations. The themes under which sexual power relations are examined are as follows:

- gendered tasks
- compulsive heterosexuality
- homosociability

Gendered Tasks

In this section practices on the shopfloor are deconstructed to reveal the ways in which hierarchical differences are reproduced or transformed between women and men, femininities and masculinities. Underpinning the gendered tasks are assumptions about sexual abilities. Vast amounts of research highlights the ways in which sexuality affects social relations and saturates organisations (Adkins, 1995; Calas & Smircich, 1991; Collinson, 1992; Collinson & Hearn, 1997; Filby, 1992; Gutek, 1992; Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Pringle, 1989; Sheppard, 1992). The ways in which sexuality is also weaved through actual work practices and the assumptions underpinning these has received less attention. Acker (1992) speaks of the gendered subtext in all organisations and the inherent gendering of jobs covered by a veil of neutrality. At Past Times the gendering of jobs occurs through the assumptions about sexual abilities, related to the role of individuals in procreation. The ways in which these perpetuate stereotypical notions of ability are now unravelled.

At an organisational level management speak through the 'formal' voice of bureaucracy where job descriptions are perceived as neutral frameworks for recruitment. This assumption of gender neutrality occurs through the objectifying, practice of managing staff (Acker, 1992). Part of the process of managing is the writing of job descriptions and adoption of them at the recruitment stage, as the following manager describes:

Barry (Senior Management)

"the job descriptions are not, they are there to appoint really, once in position they are hardly ever referred to ... it is always difficult to get somebody into our frame of mind, a customer focused frame of mind, it is easier to give them training on how to operate an ice machine or put the badminton courts up, but if they have got the wrong type of attitude then you are struggling"

Reskin and Roos (1990) identify the importance of choice of recruiters during selection, whereby those with the most desirable characteristics are placed at the top of the job queue. The impact of personal choice upon this process is highlighted by a senior manager:

Belinda (Senior Management)

"we employ more personalities now, we have got more people who are switched on, pro active, can think for themselves, will talk to customers, erm, so yeah that profile has changed but we have orchestrated that."

The concentration is upon developing the necessary skill set, but the basic criteria is for individuals with customer care skills, which are perceived as communication and common sense. The growth in the service industries parallels the number of women entering the labour market and a rise in part-time, casual jobs (Hakim, 1996; Scott, 1995). The association of women with specific skill sets, particularly those closely aligned to skills required for nurturing families, has been reaffirmed by women's movement into service jobs (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997; Filby, 1992; McDowell, 1997).

Ways in which practices among shopfloor staff contribute to the construction of sexual identities is through features of physicality and child's play.

'Let's Get Physical'

All job tasks¹⁸ in the centre focused around preparing for, and clearing up after, the customer and ensuring all standards of health and safety were adhered to. The focus of a job on domestic related chores, which ideologically are perceived as women's work (Truss, 1993), would suggest more women than men accomplish them. The emphasis, however, in discussing work with full-time attendants is not on the cleaning aspects of work, but what is perceived as heavy duty, manual work, such as moving equipment. Within this, repetitive lifting tasks, such as working with children, are not highlighted. As Truss argues, ideologically working with children or cleaning up is not perceived as masculine.

Gomez (1994), in an analysis of the production of washing machines, identified the need to distinguish between the 'absolute level' of strength necessary for a task and the length of time over which effort is maintained. The continuous repetition of tasks, such as those usually accomplished by women on production lines or looking after children, are the most physically demanding (Gomez, 1994). Yet, at Past Times, the momentarily physically stressful jobs are the ones which are most visible and are used in particular constructions of masculinity. Activities at Past Times which capture the most attention include setting out equipment, such as trampolines, inflatables in the pool, and hall equipment. These intermittent activities are extremely important in maintaining a simple dichotomy between men and women's physical abilities:

Carter (Lower Management)

"Can I be sexist? The trampolines, putting the trampolines out, the girls find it very difficult physically even though they are saying we want equality, there are certain jobs in here that you wouldn't put a girl to do. You might send them down to give a hand, to pull out the crash mats or they can take the wheels away"

Dean (SF Senior)

"Women workers, can't do the physical things like mats for karate, cover over the pool, inflatables, trampoline, things like that"

The focus remains on the strength and power required in putting the equipment out rather than the other elements of knowledge and practice necessary. Also ignored in such opinions are the amount of opportunities staff have to work with the equipment. Full time staff (who are male) will be more involved with this element of the job more often while casual and part-time staff (more

¹⁸ This evidence was taken from the job descriptions provided by the management of Past Times.

women) will have less practice, therefore less experience. Just to ensure the myth of female frailty remains utmost in the minds of the shopfloor, old stories are always available to furnish the evidence of women's physical failures within the walls of Past Times. Folklore¹⁹ is re-told by DMs and both highlights women's physical inferiority and demeans female managers. The continued resuscitation of old stories demonstrate the precariousness of masculinity and the perpetual negotiations required to retain a hegemonic position.

In reality equipment caused all staff, regardless of sex, problems because the majority of staff (casual and part-time) did not have regular exposure to them. For those working only during the holiday, a swift induction to all equipment did not allow them enough experience to immediately adopt the correct method and training was not held regularly enough to gain practice.

Hegemonic masculinity on the shopfloor is under threat from both management and young women coming to work as attendants. To counter this, different routes provide ways for men to reassert their hegemonic masculinity. One way in which this form of masculinity is protected is through the maintenance of an elite sub-section of attendants (called Squads), who are pulled together for special events. Squads are units of staff organised specifically to set up the seating, or whatever is required, in the sports hall or on the ice rink. The very term 'squad', with a forces connection, denotes male supremacy and specialism. DMs and SLAs argue that specific characteristics are crucially important to squads, for example strength, physical stamina and excellent team spirit. Squads are usually made up of the male attendants and the rationale for this is as follows:

Emlyn (Shopfloor)

"It is basically because there is lots of lifting, pushing and pulling and stuff. To be perfectly honest some of the women in here I don't think they could be on the squad. People say oh that is sexist, but I don't think some of them could handle it so I appreciate why they have guys on the squad."

Elvis (Shopfloor)

"the main difference is when the squads, when there are special events there is like rigging, there is like big seating units that get pulled out and it is really heavy work and it is always virtually all men. ... Normally you tell the staffing officer when you are available and then they pick out a pool of staff. Sometimes you get women in them, but they say oh nah there are women, but normally it is men because it is heavy work."

¹⁹ Information labelled 'folklore' was recorded in field notes as described by staff.

The focus on the physical aspects of the job and logic of weakness attached to all women is a similar segregatory strategy to that used in sport. Muscularity is positioned as central to success in the role, which simultaneously marginalises women from the experience (Whitson, 1990). Further support is provided to the elitism of the squads through the establishment of trust and efficiency between those working, something which is argued to depend upon time and experience. The first to find out about squads are usually those who work full-time, a segment of the work force that is dominated by men.

Working on the squads is physically demanding, but the dividends accrued include a bonus for the extra hours and night shifts worked as well as access to an elite group²⁰. The only woman who works the squads regularly was involved from the beginning, 18 years ago. She describes how her experiences differ to other women:

Elise (Shopfloor)

"I been here so long I have gone on most of the squad work and what have you whereas most of the girls really they just get put on the cleaning"

Gatekeepers for squads are now the DMs, who draw up the rotas and disseminate information about upcoming events. Within their construction of a femininity fostering care, there is no room for physical strength or size for women. The perception of body size and ability is rooted in the big = strong, small = weak dichotomy:

Erla (Shopfloor)

"There might be occasions when I am not asked to do stuff like put the trampolines out simply because I am a slight build and it is quite difficult. But I have done it a few times erm, basically unless they ask me more often to do it I am not going to learn how to do it by myself. Every time I go down someone has to show me. So that is all on a gender basis I think. Most of the jobs can be done by anyone."

The inability of some women to manage the equipment is more likely due to insufficient levels of refresher training on the heavier, lesser used pieces of equipment and the speed at which induction occurred. Other LAs commented on how many difference pieces of some equipment there are, all of which require slight different techniques to put them out:

Edmund (Shopfloor)

"I mean putting a trampoline away is er, takes me all my time to fold a trampoline up. Some of the older trampolines we have here are er, cast iron, erm, not cast iron, steel tubing. The modern ones are like an aluminium and they are lighter, but the older ones are steel tubing and they are very heavy."

²⁰ Information provided by a squad member during an informal chat.

Clearly, if attention was paid to the number of times individuals actually did put out, or put away, equipment, the elitism of the task would be lost. Through the appropriation of particular tasks, male workers stamp their authority on certain aspects of work knowledge. The masculinity of squads and equipment preparation also form specific bonds between men. These were similar processes that Cockburn (1985) discovered occurring between men through technology.

The symbolic power of these parts of the work process is immense because they have become legitimated in day to day discourse about the job, yet in real terms they constitute a very small part of the overall job. Squads occur only for special events, of which there used to be at least four a year, now this has fallen to one or two. Putting out equipment occurs a few times a week, but, because of the rostering of staff the chances of an attendant attending to it more than once every three weeks is small.

The focus of male attendants on the physical aspects of the job deflects attention away from the core tasks involved, which are to help the public, uphold the regulations and ensure health and safety policy is adhered to at all times. The times that all staff commented upon it being physically demanding is standing on the poolside in the middle of the summer:

Enola (Shopfloor)

"Compared to what I used to do, this is an easy job, you know, it is physically quite hard from time to time, tiring in that sense. You do two hours down the pool I come off quite tired even though you are stuck on the pool side because you are standing all the time and the heat. You standing there in 85 degrees. It saps you, you sweat."

The roof over the pool is made of glass, which makes the work very hard in the summer because the glass ceiling accentuates the heat already inside. Attendants are not allowed to leave their spots unless there is an emergency, so can go for up to four hours with no drink to refresh them. Attendants must remain on guard and attentive at all times since one split second of looking away could result in a tragedy. This is a much larger part of the job than is accounted for in discussions about the work and also much more physically sapping, yet it becomes invisible in the dominant discourse about the attendant's job.

Another aspect of the attendant's work which remains invisible is the physical exertion involved in looking after children. This is analysed next.

'Child's Play'

In support of traditional perceptions of men and women's oppositional abilities, while the squads and equipment handling are clearly aligned with dominant masculinity, emphasised femininity is secured on the shopfloor by the allocation of female attendants to childcare and women to the reception area. The reception area is important because it is the first impression of the centre and because it is always dominated by well presented, co-operative women. The role of a receptionist is to 'provide an effective front line service for our customers', both in reception and on the 'help desk'²¹. This role is not indifferent to that of an airline hostess (Hochschild, 1983; Tyler & Hancock, 1998), waitress (Adkins, 1995) or cashier (Filby, 1992).

A second, and more potent way in which sexual identities underpin power relations in the centre is through the allocation of childcare. Although job descriptions are equally bland for all attendants, the implementation of them is gender specific in a number of areas. Access to knowledge about working with children is severely regulated by the practices in the centre, ensuring the perpetuation of female bodies being associated with children. Such practices mirror the use of an ideology of motherhood which continues to abound across the service industry in assumptions of ability (Adkins, 1995; Collinson & Collinson, 1992; Crompton & Jones, 1990; Filby, 1992; Kerfoot & Knights, 1992; Tyler & Hancock, 1998)

The allocation of women to the children's play area and onto specific schemes for children in the holidays has the full support of the manager. Recently a young female attendant put in a request for tasks such as childcare to be distributed a little more evenly. Although the management believe everyone is equally capable of accomplishing any job, their gendered logic is demonstrated through their response to this request:

²¹ This data came from the organisational literature and job descriptions.

Erla (Shopfloor)

"I got the reply that it wasn't practical, it wasn't practical because there was no point having people supervising children that didn't want to be there."

The ability to work effectively with children requires a great deal of skill but it is something usually built up through experience. It is not experience which is confined to women, however that is the perception by management in the centre as these attendants explain:

Erla (Shopfloor)

"Being a female I tend to get lots of the child minding and I have put a suggestion in putting it nicely saying they might like to rotate staff around and make it more less sexist and put more men on the supervised play area and things."

Elise (Shopfloor)

"Some of the lads do [want to work on the children's area] and they don't get put on. They have got kids of their own and they relate to the kids, probably better than some of the young lasses that haven't got a clue what they do and they get put up."

The distribution of childcare work suggests that, in the same way as Adkins (1995) discovered, women are not workers in the same way as men. Assumptions are built into the allocation of work, which prioritises gendered abilities between men and women. This organisational logic, where a unilinear connection is made between women and childcare at the expense of men, commodifies women's bodies in the performance of emotional labour (Tyler & Hancock, 1998). In this example, as with airline hostesses in Tyler and Hancock's research, the female attendant is a socially constructed body, through which concrete representations of organisational gendered bodies are distributed. These particular bodies contribute to the broader dynamics of gendered organisational control.

While the distribution of gendered tasks contributes to a logic of sexual difference at Past Times, there are other less subtle ways in which gendered power relations are reproduced. These include sexual harassment and homophobia, both of which are now analysed within the broader concept of compulsive heterosexuality.

Compulsive Heterosexuality

Compulsive heterosexuality is a term adopted from Rich (1979) who used it to capture the unilinear power, from men over women, within sexual relations and the production of all forms of gender inequality. Rich's conception of compulsive heterosexuality as a system of social relations

provided the foundation from which sexual relations within work were considered integral to the construction of gender power relations (Adkins, 1995).

Broader ways in which other instances of sexuality reproduce heterosexuality is through male attendants' behaviour on the poolside. The nature of the work on poolside was earlier described as boring. The attendants therefore look for other ways in which to pass the time. This occurs for the majority of men through commenting to each other on female customers. The following attendant explains one incident below:

Edmund (Shopfloor)

"there was a young lady came in the pool last week with a rather audacious swimming costume on and um, it was one of these with just the thong down the back of her costume, everybody was sort of going waaaaah, we couldn't believe our eyes at first that we were seeing this, and then eventually everybody was sort of smiling, we weren't too sure which way to look, and Emmanuel, one of the attendants, was on the diving tank and I was down below and he bent over and he says er, lend us your glasses. I was just about creased by then. That is the sort of thing that goes on, it is very dry. Erm, so that sort of light hearted banter is, again it is what just passes the day."

Unearthing sexual harassment is extremely hard because of the ways in which incidences tend to go underground, dynamics which speak to the latent and manifest power of those involved. At Past Times two incidences of heterosexual harassment came to light. Very little information was provided since no-one would talk about it. In one instance, a senior male harassed a female attendant. This incident went to a disciplinary hearing but only because the mother of the female involved worked at another centre in the organisation and pursued the action. The second incident was apparently 'quietly' sorted out.

Radical feminist attention to links between male power and sexual harassment, such as that by MacKinnon (1979), Rich (1979), and Stanko (1988) led to the labelling of sexual harassment at work. The difficulty with sexual harassment is the point at which sexual interactions (through joking, flirting, etc) move from acceptable to unacceptable for those involved. In the first situation above the aggressor argued that he was only joking (this involved continually 'pinging' the bra strap and knicker elastic of the female involved) and because she did not really react he did not think there was anything wrong with it. Halford, Savage and Witz (1997) found that harassment occurs at the point where spatial politics of the body are violated. Within their study in a NHS

hospital they discovered that harassment occurred at a crisis point which was when routine 'politics of the body' (e.g. joking) went too far, which is similar to the incident at Past Times.

Senior management at Past Times claim that the way harassment is dealt with depends on the 'nature of the incident and what the person reporting it wants'. By doing this the harassment is localised and removed from the responsibility of the organisation. Although referring to both incidences as serious, the manager describes how one was dealt with 'quietly'. This invisibility of harassment is an important dynamic in the broader principle of organisation through which sexuality contributes to gendered relations (Adkins, 1995).

In insurance sales Collinson and Collinson (1996) found that strategies of resistance, integration, indifference, distancing or denial all failed to challenge the 'vicious circularity of the asymmetrical gendered power relations through which their subordination was reinforced' (1996, p. 45-46). Occurring within a traditionally male echelon Collinson and Collinson discovered that harassment confirmed women's unsuitability for the work and that it was just a tool to test women's acceptability. The experiences of female attendants in the staff room, where others verbally abuse them, is described as a way of testing them out by male attendants. The dynamics of such behaviour are very close to those of heterosexual harassment which, together, contribute to the reproduction of unequal power relations between men and women on the shopfloor.

Cockburn (1991), Collinson (1992) and Collinson and Collinson (1996) assert that central to sexual harassment practices is the nature and culture of the industry. Within sport, an institution with a distinct male heritage, sexual harassment may be expected to restrict women's progress within a hitherto male dominated area since, as DiTomaso (1989) claims, women moving into non-traditional areas are more likely to experience harassment. In conflict, however, is the situation of sport within the broader industry of service provision, a sector dominated by women (Hakim, 1997). Adkins (1995), across a fun park, restaurant and hotel and Filby (1992), in betting shops, revealed greater sexualisation of women which female staff perceived as part of the job when

dealing with customers. These aspects of compulsive heterosexuality were not prevalent at Past Times, however a different aspect of sexualisation arose.

At Past Times, rather than direct harassment, women managers suffer challenges to their positional authority based upon interpretations of their sexual identity²². The existence of competent senior female management creates uncertainty among staff. Unable to cope with competent female management, combined with the move towards being a commercially responsible organisation, staff question the sexuality of female managers:

Caroline (Lower Management)

"Look at all the bloody female managers there, whoooo been at it for years."

Elise (Shopfloor)

"If you get on with such and such you are gay because there is a couple of management are so everybody thinks, well if you are getting on you must be that way inclined. That is the tendency, mainly from the fellas I would say."

Eria (Shopfloor)

"when anybody in new management comes and it is actually male they say ohhh, he is in with the click isn't he, he must be in with the right person. If there is a woman ah well they are all gay you know, did you not know that they are all gay."

The fascination with female managers' sexuality reflects assumptions of a heterosexual rationality for management and one of the ways through which the female body is marked when it crosses into territory previously marked as male. Homophobic responses are predicated upon specific interpretations of femininity, which doubles as a code for heterosexuality (Kolnes, 1995). Sheppard (1992) contends that female managers appearing too masculine or too feminine can experience a loss of credibility. The parameters of acceptability by which the boundaries of masculinity and femininity are policed is marriage and stems from the 'family' history of Past Times. This kind of sexual rigidity and expectations of body presentation are reinforced by female managers' experiences with individuals from outside the centre. A manager explains how she feels she contravenes various assumptions of an emphasised femininity:

Barbara (Senior Management)

"people just, a part from being female I am small, erm, I am quite petite, I don't wear make up, I haven't got long hair, do you know what I mean, so I think like the whole image shocks people sometimes."

²² Data for this emerged from both interviews and observations, as recorded in field notes.

This manager feels that her failure to abide by unspoken 'norms' regulating appearance 'shocks' both men and women. Sheppard (1992) found similar problems from women in management, but her work focused more on the barriers women faced from the masculine defined structures rather than from other women. In contrast to the apparent lack of support among women in the centre, a male homosociability emerged across the shopfloor.

Homosociability

At Past Times the visible culture on the shopfloor and banter between men demonstrates one form of male sociability. Through these interactions, particular the full-time staff, men's sexuality is routinely privileged which makes it extremely hard for women to occupy subject positions. This is even true for those women that have moved on up the organisational hierarchy. One manager describes how she cannot even enter the staff room now without feeling nervous, which shows the way she is displaced as a woman through the male dominated discourse. This kind of heterosexualised discourse is similar to that revealed by Halford, Savage and Witz (1997) in a bank, and between female nurses and male doctors in a NHS hospital.

Two clear groups of men emerged at Past Times, one who have been called the 'lads' throughout this chapter, and a second group who meet for a quiet drink and train in the gym together. The lads are characterised by large drinking sessions and holidays in Ibiza. Their various escapades are retold throughout the centre to prove their masculinity. The stories are along the themes of the following:

Emlyn (Shopfloor)

"Just what we did last night, how much beer we consumed, what states we were in and what we did and er, I got arrested 6 month ago, drunk and disorderly for urinating in a public place which was nowt really and got a caution for it - see I couldn't come in here and tell the manager about that but I could come in here and tell all the lads that and the duty managers who I get on with but I couldn't tell the manager because I think she would throw a loopy."

Eric (Shopfloor)

"We have water fights down on the pool with hoses and that, I think if she seen that she would not be happy, but the senior attendants I work with they get involved, we chuck people in the pool on birthdays and that, I mean I have been in three times and er it is a good laugh, but we have got one senior attendant and but er he is worse than us for chucking people in the pool and hosing people and practical jokes. That is what you want though isn't it, I mean he can be serious when he wants but he like understands that, if you soak him he will come running back and soak you. Nothing will be said."

This kind of behaviour also extends to the SLAs, further confirming the bonding among some of the men on the shopfloor. The lack of attention by the permanent DMs to this kind of play fighting silently condones it, sustaining a hegemonic model of masculinity which prioritises competition, elements of aggressiveness, separation from women and compliance with male authority. These are characteristics which traditionally confirmed men's membership of the working class (Bradley, 1996). In the centre this becomes an element in the construction of their identities.

As in sport, the ability to initiate and legitimate this kind of conduct allows the lads and more broadly, most of the men, to inhabit particular positions of power and to reproduce these relations in a way which maintains their dominance (Carrigan, Connell & Lee, 1987). Although labelled as fooling around, these practices marginalise and disadvantage others in the centre, in particular other female staff.

Across Past Times homosociability occurs through humour, language and behaviour, all of which are incorporated into day-to-day work practices and processes. The ways in which the actions of a few produce a broader identity from which all men benefit and women are marginalised can be described as what Connell (1996) has termed the 'patriarchal dividend'. Other ways in which this operates can be seen through the construction, and resistance to, sporting identities at Past Times.

SPORTING IDENTITY

At this initial stage of analysis, the concept of sporting identities did not appear to be important in the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations. As contact with the organisation deepened, it slowly emerged how central the construction of sport is to the construction of gendered power relations.

The traditional male heritage inherent to sport²³ creates an immediate bond between men (Hargreaves, 1994; Whitson, 1994). From a Foucauldian perspective, sport consists of an ensemble of knowledges and practices which discipline the body in gendered ways (Cole, 1991). Integral to these processes is the naturalisation of difference between men and women, a difference which is being challenged in the 1990s as women's participation increases across a broad range of sports and performances edge closer to various male achievements. At Past Times football provides bridges between some men and some women and gives common ground for informal chats. A senior manager realises the importance of football to many of the male staff and uses this to her advantage:

Barbara (Senior Management)

"I think that is useful from my point of view to be able to talk to staff about sport. I mean I have always found it such a bonus in my life that I am interested in football because it gives me that link with men"

By using sport as a way of communicating with staff management attempt to subvert the formal barriers of authority. The centrality of football to the North East culture presents a double edged sword for female managers. This is because football, as a male dominated institution, constructs specific relations between and among men at the expense of women and social relationships between men are prioritised (Dunning, 1986; Whitson, 1994). This is not, however, a simple linear relationship marginalising all women and privileging all men. The fact that the manager identifies that it provides a link with men is an acknowledgement of the gendered isolating characteristics of sport. In her experience sport does not provide a link with women, despite other female staff being interested in football.

Connell (1987) asserts that sport is a conduit for people to learn how the gendered body represents different indicators of success for men and women. This is reflected at Past Times through the ways in which staff discuss their sporting involvement. All the senior managers at the centre have been involved at a high level of sport through participation or coaching. The two female managers are also currently involved at elite levels in untraditional sports (triathlon and football). Both of these women discussed how they keep it completely separate from work. Very

²³ See Chapter III for greater exploration of this.

few people know of the manager's playing commitment to football although they are aware she can chat about the sport. The other individual's involvement in triathlon is known because she has worked at the centre for a long period of time.

The complete separation of these individuals' sporting identities from their work life suggests they do not see it as appropriate to combine the two, that there might be conflict if they did. One possible explanation for this is that they see it as detrimental, or at least not contributing to, their organisational life. Ironically through, their organisational identity for shopfloor staff is over ridden by their assumed sexual identities. This example demonstrates the clash for staff between the real life female bodies occupying management positions and the abstract male bodies that are assumed to be naturally suited to these positions. These kinds of problems that the female individuals come up against speak directly to the conflict between the construction of bipolar identities for men and women and their respective organisational positions.

CONCLUSION

My overall impressions, encapsulated within 'Stepping In', provide the feeling that there are more men involved in managing and women in serving, despite management strongly stating their belief that any member of staff can do anything. As we move through Past Times it becomes abundantly clear that contrary to an openness where any worker, regardless of gender, can under-take any task, strict boundaries exist perpetuating a division between men and women's work. There are many aspects of the work routine which both men and women do under-take, but the potency of those elements restricted largely to men and women serve to reproduce an ideology of gendered difference.

The uniform policy across Past Times continues to restrict women to skirts and men to trousers. This gendered divide is reinforced by the corporation and indicates that those in key decision making positions feel there is still a need to signify a difference between men and women. The

continuation of a policy such as this demonstrates one of the ways in which organisations collude in the differentiation of men and women. Connell (1995) asks if the differences between men and women are so natural, why do we continually need to highlight these differences. The management structure above Past Times indicate that differences between men and women still need to be highlighted through the continuation of this gendered policy.

Across Past Times the use of space reflects various dynamics of power through which hierarchical divisions are maintained and access to knowledge is protected. Of significance to the reproduction of gender power relations are the ways in which a small group of male staff across the shopfloor dominate particular areas, and secondly, the ways in which these areas come to be seen as important in these dynamics. The dynamics supporting the hierarchies of space and the discourse have developed over a long period and the essential players are those individuals who have worked at the centre since it was built.

The invisibility of senior management, resulting from the pressures of CCT and budget restrictions, adds to the conflict they experience with shopfloor staff. In contrast, the lower managers' ability to remain invisible from customers and their attendants adds to their control of workers. Because of the dominance of men in these lower positions, this becomes an important dynamics of gendered relations. Further adding to this aspect of control is the concentration of male workers in the full-time shopfloor positions. The predominantly male full-time workforce is a side effect of broader organisational changes, namely CCT and the pressure upon the management to make economic efficiencies. Since staffing costs take up the largest amount of the budget, this is the first area to be rationalised and the quickest way to do this was to shift from a full-time workforce to a small core full-time workforce supported by a peripheral part-time and casual pool of staff. While these dynamics have limited the number of full-time female shopfloor workers, it has operated to the benefit of women in management. Over the last few years, the only staff to be promoted from within have been women.

Very clear was that the confinement of women to childcare and reception, and concentration of men across the lifting tasks and squad work naturalises a divide in gendered ability. The maintenance of these patterns under a female dominated management demonstrates a key point. This is that just because women are in positions of power this does not automatically mean that they will be sensitive to gender issues.

All of the dynamics unravelled at Past Times contribute to the ongoing construction of various identities which reproduce and transform gendered relations. Three key identities emerged as the most important in the reproduction of gender power relations, namely organisational, sexual and sporting identities, while class identity was also revealed. At the organisational level there is conflict between an old, patriarchal identity reliant upon a nuclear family and class consciousness for its key characteristics and an emergent, new corporate identity which is transforming elements of gender power relations. Senior management, in conjunction with the rest of the parent organisation, pursue the corporate identity which is characterised by competition, management control and performance levels.

A dominant sexual identity is built up through the combination of gendered tasks, compulsive heterosexuality and homosociability, which perpetuates male advantage and female disadvantage. Gendered tasks, predicated upon assumptions of natural difference, perpetuate through both practice and symbolical representation strict divides between men and women. This sexual difference gains further support through the ways in which the social relations around sex are handled. Male pool attendants 'admire' females swimming with good bodies, using it as a way of bonding across the pool and to pass the time.

The identification of class identity was highlighted through the concept of the 'lads'. Amongst the attendants a combination of sporting and class identities become a potent strength serving to marginalise all women and exclude more senior managers. Although well hidden, the third matrix of identities integral to the reproduction of power relations are those constructed around and

through sport. Being located in the North, football is an integral part of leisure time. A lot of banter between the men at the centre focused on their rival football teams. This preoccupation provided an easy way for senior management to chat to their male staff. Sporting involvement however, did not appear as a positive attribute to senior female managers. While both senior women were actively involved at elite levels in non-mainstream sports, this was not really discussed within work. While automatically enhancing men's organisational status (for instance through football the men play after work), women did not use their sporting involvement in the same way. Through this it is possible to see the collision of the culture of sport with organisational culture in the maintenance of unequal gender relations to the disadvantage of women. A senior manager made an observation of the ways in which sport is male dominated:

Barbara (Senior Management)

"sport is seen to be the male domain, you just need to look on the back of all the tabloids and it is all male sport and I think that transfers into the leisure industry because a lot of people don't differentiate sport from the leisure industry, it sort of merges into one and because sport is male dominated then people assume that that maleness erm, is within the leisure industry as well and I mean a lot of the time it is."

Past Times' management structure is not usual for local authority owned centres across the country. Although women may be in positions of leadership, this does not automatically result in vast changes in assumptions about gendered abilities or the distribution of work along gendered lines.

CHAPTER IX

CASE STUDY TWO: SPORT GOODS – A MANUFACTURING / DISTRIBUTION COMPANY

CHAPTER IX

CASE STUDY 2: SPORTING GOODS

A MANUFACTURING/DISTRIBUTION COMPANY

INTRODUCTION

Modern organisations are forced to adapt to rapidly changing global demands. To survive and grow in the current economic climate, organisations such as Sporting Goods, make modifications in strategy, size, environment and technology in attempts to retain competitive advantage within an increasingly pressurised market. Downsizing, restructuring and insecurity are all familiar terms among today's businesses, more often than not meaning that the number of those employed will be reduced. This consequently effects social practices within the organisation, individuals' roles and responsibilities, including length of hours worked, and their place within shifting or static gender power relations.

This chapter analyses the ways in which gender power relations underpin Sporting Goods, a privately owned sports equipment and clothing company. Initially I reflect upon my first impressions in the context of walking into Sporting Goods. This overview links the formal organisation with social interactions, a link which is further extended through an analysis of the interview data to a broader study of the active working relations in Sporting Goods. Signs and symbols visibly provide the greatest impact when entering the organisation giving clues about some of the dynamics of gender power relations. I support these through an examination of the ways in which men and men, men and women, women and women work and intermingle, generating, challenging and perpetuating various power relationships. Within the broader theme of interactions, space and verbal authority emerge as two core issues through which gendered territories are marked out. Beyond interactions, the embeddedness of masculinities and femininities emanate from many organisational arrangements.

STEPPING IN¹

Sporting Goods is situated in the middle of an industrial site, moulded in amongst other warehouses and two storey high blocks. Walking from the car park to the reception area, you feel that eyes are staring at you from behind the two levels of one way glass in the L shaped building. Down on the longest part of the L, two women are smoking and speaking quietly outside a second door; as they see me looking over they smile.

I turn back and walk through two sets of glass doors into a reception area and am immediately greeted by a life sized male golfer about to tee off, a male tennis player mid serve and a male squash player returning a shot. To the right, a stylish desk curves across the area, seated behind this is an extremely smart, made-up female receptionist who welcomes me to the company. After enquiring whom I was visiting, she asks me to fill out the visitors' book and a badge while she calls through to the MD's office. I also notice that the receptionist is tied to the computer station by her earphones, which makes it impossible for her to stand and greet visitors.

I sit down in one of two leather chairs, parted by a small coffee table loaded with Sporting Goods product catalogues and magazines displaying their adverts. Very shortly another woman appears, asking me if I would like any kind of refreshment. After accepting a cup of coffee, I sit and chat to the receptionist who is now training up a young woman on the system. We all talk intermittently about the difficulties of picking up a new system and how intimidating it can be, the telephone rings continually.

At this point the MD comes into reception and shakes my hand, introducing himself. We then walk out of reception into a corridor and turn left, through a set of double doors. These open into a very long, rectangular open office which is split in half by a double row of filing cabinets, back to back. These cabinets serve to divide two groups of people, who I assume work within the export and golf teams because of various signs which suggest that. Immediately on the right as you walk into this long office space are two large white boards. Across the top the title

¹ This descriptive text is a combination of observations from the field notes and information provided through the interviews.

Export is written and underneath this various targets and achievements to date are set out. Beside the second team at the top is a similar set of boards, with Golf across the top and similar figures laid out. The atmosphere is buzzing with telephones ringing constantly and questions being fired backwards and forwards within each team. As I glanced around the room, it was instantly obvious that the teams were predominantly made up of women. Two men were working in the export team, and two other men chatted in another large office beyond the MD's. As we made our way from the reception to the MD's office he continually greeted and chatted easily with staff both passing by and working at their desk.

The MD's office is the first on the right, it is a large room with a large cupboard down one wall and a desk with a large conference table extending from the front. As soon as the door is shut, silence descends, creating an environment which feels far removed from the noise of next door. The view from his window is also very different. Office staff have the car park to view, while the MD can look upon an area of green grass. On this visit I did not go any further around the building as our discussions were only preliminary, however my overall impression was one of a relaxed, friendly environment within which women dominated the office area.

As soon as I enter the building upon my second visit the atmosphere is discernibly different, reflecting some of the organisational changes which occurred. The receptionist is less chatty and appears on edge. After signing the visitors' book and obtaining my pass, which I do on every single visit to Sporting Goods, I wait a while - on this occasion, the reception area is much busier. More people are stopping by for a quiet gossip, the majority are women - all smartly dressed, although a couple of men come in with jeans, T shirts and boots on. These are staff from the warehouse who come to leave things for pick up, or to collect small deliveries. Throughout all of this, the receptionist continues to answer a steady flow of calls. It is very difficult to tell at times whether she is on the telephone or not as she wears a headset that ties her to the computerised telephone system.

The same cardboard figures were in reception, although this time there was more merchandise around such as golf balls, hockey balls and sticks. There were also a couple of new pictures in place of athletes now under new sponsorship deals - all of these were male athletes shown in action in their respective sport. Again, the MD comes to greet me, this time it is a different

person. As we go through the main office to access his office there is a quieter buzz and none of the chat between the MD and other staff.

After this meeting, I am taken on a tour of the building. Within the L-shape there are very clear demarcations between departments which, I am told, staff rarely cross. Downstairs, the operations department is next to the warehouse into which we did not venture. In operations it is very quiet, the only sound fingers tapping on keyboards. As you walk up the stairs large pictures of sports people accompany you on your climb. In the middle of the stairs, in the most awkward position when looking upwards, there is a female athlete playing hockey, sandwiched between two male tennis players in the middle of serving. The hockey player was mid-stride, dribbling the ball.

The boardroom is on this floor, a large room dominated by a long table and opulent leather chairs. The latest in sports technology is on show, golf equipment far outweighing the other sports. Further down the corridor on one side of the L-building you enter another large, open plan office, again dominated by female bodies. In one corner is a large, single office, and beyond four areas of seating. The two larger groups of desks (7/8 in each) I learn, are customer care teams and the two sets of smaller desks are marketing. Again, there is a general hum regularly interrupted by a telephone ringing.

On the other side of the L are accounts and IT. Although I was not taken into these offices, a glance at the staff lists reveals a dominance of female bodies in finance and male bodies in IT. Across the whole building, only two women have their own offices - the PA to the MD and the administrator who works for the Financial Director. Other than this, all senior managers have their own offices. One other thing I notice is that there is a small staff room on the second floor - I later find out that the warehouse staff have their own staff room too, beyond the locked door on the other side of the building.

First impressions suggest that, at least on the office side, more women work at Sporting Goods than men, but where men are they generally appear in key decision making positions. The reality of this perception is now examined through a break down of the activities and processes, which together constitute Sporting Goods.

MOVING THROUGH SPORTING GOODS

The picture of male superiority, female subordination played out in the reception area acts as a cameo for the larger organisation which is peeled back through the social interactions developing at Sporting Goods, the identities which emerge and signs and symbols which underpin them all. These are all examined next, starting with signs and symbols.

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

One aspect of gendering is the creation and perpetuation of symbols, images and signs which maintain, support and at times contradict gender divisions (Acker, 1990, 1992). Sporting Goods is characterised to the public through the sporting equipment and clothing it produces under its various brands². The essential sports it produces for are tennis, cricket and golf. Although women have made vast inroads to these sports in the last decade, they remain male dominated echelons (Hargreaves, 1994). This is reflected through the dominant images around the building at Sporting Goods presented in a myriad of ways, some of which are captured at the start of this chapter. The impact of these images, and other emergent ones, are now explored through corporate literature.

Pictures and Corporate Material

The life-size cardboard cut outs 'performing' in reception create a long lasting impression when you enter Sporting Goods. The dynamism, concentration and sheer power emanating from the figures is impressive and completely overshadows the receptionist behind the desk at the back of the reception area. These images remain as vivid now as the first time I entered Sporting Goods, reflecting the potency of their message. Alvesson and Due Billing (1997) believe that material objects are integral in the constitution of culture. At Sporting Goods promotional literature is significant because of the predominant male bodies and very few female bodies.

Any visitor waiting in reception has the opportunity to look through promotional material and catalogues, all of which again present predominantly male action shots across cricket, golf,

² The information about products comes from the marketing literature displayed in reception.

tennis, badminton and squash. Around the building are more action pictures of the key male athletes with one token female hockey player half way up the stairs. Such shots are only placed in common areas, there are none in any of the meeting rooms or personal offices. The bare nature of the offices reflects the short-term occupancy of many of the new management entrants.

Itzin (1995), in an analysis of gender and culture, identifies adverts as representations male dominance and female subordination which reaffirms the places of people in the social order. Furthermore, not only expressing subordination, these contribute to the constitution of inferiority. Goffman (1979) argues that adverts are not natural expressions but a construction which communicates stereotypical information about masculinity and femininity. Specifically within sporting images at Sporting Goods, active shots of muscle bound males obscure the view of female athletes who are in the background. The dominant image of the male body simultaneously constructs women as 'other', imprisoned within a feminine image (McDowell, 1997).

Other than these images, the offices are quite plain. The walls are painted a blanket magnolia, which causes any pictures to stand out all the more. The male, athletic, sporting body exists as a metaphor for the company as a whole, which would like to be seen as lean, aggressive and competitive.

Uniform

The second way in which the symbols around Sporting Goods contribute to its gender sub-structure is through the absence of a uniform among staff. Although no formal edict exists for suitable attire at work, there are clearly unspoken rules governing this which varied across the levels of staff. This is similar to Pepsi Cola (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997), and women managers in Italy (Gherardi, 1995), where dress appears as a corporate uniform because of the similarity among managers.

At Sporting Goods all female managers generally wear skirt suits³, one female sometimes wears trouser suits, while the majority of the time male managers wear Sporting Goods' own branded shirts with chinos. The confinement of women to predominantly skirt suits while their male counterparts wear casual clothes presents a highly visible difference, causing the women to stand out more than the men do. The female managers have adopted a masculine ritual within this organisational context which acts as a uniform, one which carves out a definite work identity over and above anything else. The men, alternatively, wear their own uniform which is more comfortable, has a direct link to both activity and the company's product and provides them with more of a sporting identity through work. The female managers are already highly visible because of their under-representation (Kanter, 1977) and the 'uniform' serves to accentuate this.

Sheppard (1992), in an analysis of Canadian female managers addressing their image and self image, found a variety of gender management strategies among her interviewees. In particular, moving into a male dominated culture involved learning how to manage their 'femaleness', part of which included dress. By adopting suits women accepted the male defined status quo as they were walking the balance between being business-like but female.

McDowell (1997) believes that for women, because they are marked by their body as female, the question of dress raises many complex questions. She identifies women's clothing as marked, drawing a parallel to language where the feminine form includes 'ess' or 'ette', while those words without these endings convey masculinity or maleness. In the same way McDowell demonstrates how male choices of clothing do not attract attention. Conversely, whatever women wear will attract attention. Bright, dull, alluring, plain, tight, loose, whatever form women's clothes take, they emit messages about their sexuality which men's do not (McDowell, 1997). The assumed invisibility of the symbolism of clothing is demonstrated in the following senior manager's views on what professionalism is:

Jack (Senior Management):

"Professionalism is it is not about employing a salesman in a navy suit who wears a white shirt ... it is employing a professional person who is mad about sport and the way they are professional is they know how to communicate and handle people and they are not illiterate."

³ Observations about dress codes, environment etc. come from the field notes.

On the shop floor, although there was no enforced policy on uniform⁴, an unspoken code of dress exists which places higher expectations on men. In contrast to management across the offices, the minority of men stand out. Here men are marked because of they are in the minority and because they wear a shirt, tie and smart trousers. One member of staff explains this:

Mark (SF Senior)

"As far as I am aware. I have not seen anything in black and white. I was told I would have to wear a shirt and tie in the office. Even though I do not actually see any outsiders. ... friends can't believe that we still have to wear a shirt and tie, especially when we don't see anybody from the outside."

A similar unspoken code is not in place for women. There is a far greater variety of clothing worn by women than by men in the offices. Women wear anything from leggings and baggy T-shirts up to designer suits. The only contrast is the receptionists who are both, at all times, impeccably dressed in suits accompanied by subtle jewellery and make-up.

First impressions from the promotional literature and walking through the offices provide images of a particular masculinity. This masculinity is symbolised through bodies of muscle, power and strength and appears to be the hegemonic form. This construction of hegemonic masculinity is further supported by the dominance of male bodies across the board and majority of decision making positions (See Chapter VII). Any women at management level are starkly marked out adjacent the backdrop of chinos and golf shirts through their suited attire. Other ways in which hierarchies of gendered value are buried at Sporting Goods are now examined through a variety of the interactions which occur.

INTERACTIONS

Acker (1992), Adkins (1995), Filby (1992) and Halford, Savage and Witz (1998), Hochschild (1983), McDowell (1997), Rees (1992) and Truss (1993), are just a few of the researchers who have demonstrated across industries that the interactions between men and women, men and men and women and women contribute to the construction of gendered social structures and processes. The key interactions⁵ contributing to the ongoing construction of and, at times,

⁴ There were no formal policy documents which could be produced; but managers operated this unspoken rule.

⁵ This is a combination of data from the interviews and observations.

challenges to, gender relations emerged through the themes of space and social relations between and among men and women.

For decades both geographical and architectural segregation have played a role in the separation of men and women (Spain, 1992). The importance of the use of space in the negotiation of gender power relations emerged immediately during my first experiences at Sporting Goods. The strategies deployed around the use of space to challenge or reconstruct boundaries in the context of gender power relations are now explored.

SPACE

The layouts of work environments are integral to the construction of gender relations through the ways in which acceptable behaviour are allocated to various spaces (McDowell, 1998; Spain, 1992). The office landscape is a concrete expression of the particular institutionalisation of class, gender and power by either facilitating or constraining symbolic and physical interactions (Spain, 1992). The organisational hierarchy at Sporting Goods demonstrates the clear demarcation between the management and shop floor for the distribution of men and women. These are the formal spaces occupied by these gendered individuals, insights to the informal ways in which control and power are accessed cannot be observed by such a unilinear view. Observations and interviews therefore provide more perspectives on the use of space within the dynamics of gender power relations.

The utilisation of space can be used for both reinforcement of hierarchical boundaries and to assert power, the clearest example of this is within Jeremy Bentham's panopticon. Foucault believed the panopticon could reproduce relations of subjectivity and power:

"It is a type of location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchical organisation, of disposition of centres and channels of power" (1977, p. 202).

At Sporting Goods both the visibility and invisibility of space mark out gendered boundaries. The areas critical at Sporting Goods in reproducing gendered relations of male privilege and female subordination are the reception, shop floor (warehouse and offices), canteens and board room. The impact of these areas on gendered interactions is discussed through the restriction of space, visibility and invisibility of staff.

Restriction of Space

As you walk around Sporting Goods, the only staff you are likely to see moving between departments are the managers. Any time that I was free to move around the company the restriction of movement for all office staff was obvious, more so because the open plan style ensured any empty seats were very visible. In contrast, senior managers and directors enjoyed their own office. There were two exceptions, the PA to the MD and the administrator supporting the Financial Director who each had their own offices. These were very much smaller than their managers' spaces and were next door to their respective boss. This restriction to an office serves to confer exclusiveness and authority upon the senior managers and, to some extent, the two secretaries. Although being differentiated from the rest of staff by having access to a small space with four walls and a door, the secretaries' offices are a great deal smaller than their bosses, reflecting their lower status. This space operates to locate the secretaries outside of the hierarchy of authority, since middle, lower managers and SF senior staff do not have their own office. This is similar to the findings of Pringle (1992), in her study of secretary-boss relationships.

The separation of the secretaries from the open plan areas reflects the confidential nature of work they will be dealing with. This provides a paradox for these individuals, since to be privy to such information is powerful only to the extent to which they can manipulate it outside of their office through interactions with others. However, to do this would then endanger their position and access to this knowledge.

The restriction of space operates to construct a particular form of femininity as subordinate in the reception area. The restriction of receptionists to the front desk and the telephone places them in an inferior position when visitors walk into the reception area⁶. This is an area presenting action, through the life-size images of male athletes against female immobility at the desk. Receptionists are tied to the desk because the telephone system operates through a headset connected to a computer. Movement from this area is heavily regulated, and

⁶ Field notes.

absences must be covered and approved. Another dynamic through which space is appropriated in the exercise of power is that of visibility.

Visibility

Open plan offices mean that generally all telephone conversations are audible and anyone away from their desk is highly visible. The layout also makes it easy to establish the ratio of men to women. My first impressions were that more women worked in the offices, supported by the official breakdown. Forty-one women work in the offices compared to five men. The following employee describes the impact of open plan:

Maddy (SF Senior):

"an over heard telephone conversation - that is how you find out people are leaving, so and so sounded as though she was on the phone to an agency the other day because the open plan offices you can hear everyone's conversations."

As such greater surveillance of staff can occur, enhanced by the lack of opportunities to go away from the office during lunchtime. This results in default surveillance purely because staff have nowhere to go. The site of Sporting Goods, in the middle of an industrial estate, makes the half an hour lunch break too short to get to the nearest town⁷. The only options open to the majority of staff is to spend their time at their desk, wander around the industrial site or sit in the canteen. The canteen is available to all staff, theoretically, but in practice remains governed by a small group of older women who work for senior managers. Consequently, the majority of staff stay at their desks during the lunch period. The following customer care clerk outlines the dilemmas for her over lunch:

Nerys (Customer care):

"I try to have my dinner even if it is just at my desk I have my sandwich. Not everyone does and they should. A lass at work she went to her doctors, she has not been feeling too good and he said do you have a dinner break and she said no not really, he said well you should, get out for half an hour each day. Sometimes if you go out you feel guilty because other people aren't going out and it is like oh can't be bad having a dinner."

This kind of policing serves to confine individuals to their desks. Since women dominate the office space, this particular dynamic demonstrates the heterogeneity among female staff. One small group, however, does emerge as more visible than the rest. This group is marked out through their use of the canteen.

⁷ These findings are from field notes. I also experienced the problems associated with having no transport and being a long way from the nearest shops.

The canteen is located on the second floor and boasts the following amenities:

Nanette (Shopfloor):

"there is one upstairs above reception area, .. there is just a snack and can vendor in there, we did look at getting food vending machines but erm the usual story it was too expensive, we have got a microwave in the kitchen but other than that there is no food."

Very rarely do you see this room filled by anyone but a small group of older women who meet every lunchtime for their half-hour break⁸. These women are all secretaries and have worked at Sporting Goods for at least 20 years. Informally they are referred to as the coven by other staff and are known to possess, collectively, a large amount of information about the organisation and individuals within it. The secretaries' dominance of this 'open' space reflects the way they manage their relationships with both other, younger, secretaries in the organisation and other staff:

Jason (Senior Management):

"information comes up in the gossip and when the coven have their meeting, I hope this tape doesn't get anywhere I would be bloody shot, I would be finished! When the er, when they all sit down at lunch and hold court it all comes out, they all have a good gripe, some of it is very very justified, some of it is very very negative, it is rather bitchy so they are quite dangerous because they cause the under-current and the under-current can be quite savage at times, people can be really ostracised. It can be quite difficult. Other secretaries who don't fit in get completely shunned."

The daily collective meetings are a repetitive way of marking out the territory and policing the boundaries of their group. It also acts as a constant reminder to other secretaries and staff that they are set apart from everyone else.

Invisibility

The invisible ways in which spatial arrangements and movements are controlled illustrate some of the more subtle ways power relations operate (Heiskanen & Rantalaiho, 1997; Spain, 1992). The dominance of female bodies across the offices reflects their confinement to the building, while managers, who are predominantly male, experience freedom of movement. This freedom extends to both inside and outside the offices.

The largest room in the whole building is the boardroom. It is located at the top of the stairs, on the second floor with windows overlooking the only green area on the site. This location means that everybody in the offices passes it at least twice a day, thereby making its presence highly visible. The boundaries of interaction are set around territory marked out as male because of the male dominated organisational hierarchy with only one senior female manager and an

⁸ These observations were recorded in the field notes.

overall dominance of 25 male managers to 3 female managers across the offices (this is excluding the sales managers). The boardroom is somewhat of a paradox though, because it only remains visible when it is empty and the door is open, once it is closed it takes on a different kind of significance.

Dominance of the boardroom by male bodies reflects broader assumptions about accumulation of merit aligned with a particular form of masculinity, specifically hegemonic masculinity (Burton, 1991; Collinson & Hearn, 1997). The occupation of this space by white, males in senior positions of authority, is generally to assess and review targets and budgets. Such a preoccupation with performance, new markets, profits, production and costs, underpins hegemonic masculinity. These characteristics are similar to those aligned by Collinson and Hearn (1997) to what they labelled 'entrepreneurial' masculinity. This is one form of multiple masculinities they identified within management, competing for dominance.

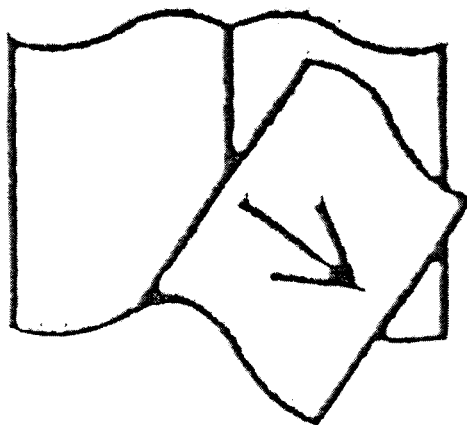
The boardroom, by its design standing out from the rest of the building, proffers both invisibility and privacy to senior managers. This is because all meetings are held behind closed doors. Within the room is a long⁹ table with 12 large, leather, high-backed chairs with arm rests, full audio-presentation equipment, a white board, flip chart and the full product range. Rarely is it used by anyone except management. Regular meetings occur here between management during which female secretaries keep the coffee machine fresh and bring in appropriate refreshments, after knocking. The expectation of service from the female secretaries ensures this remains a gendered interaction. Although being involved in meetings in this room myself, never once did any of the managers attempt to refill the coffee machine. In this respect some personal characteristics associated with women continue to be confirmed as gendered skills.

In contrast to the boardroom, which contributes to both visible and invisible control, the warehouse is clearly demarcated from the main office. This operates through two mechanisms. The warehouse staff have their own entrance and a coded lock, to which very few staff have access, marks the entry door from the office. The secured access to the

⁹ Observations recorded in field notes.

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SOCIAL RELATIONS

The restriction of space operates as one way through which interactions are monitored and controlled between men and women, women and women, men and men within Sporting Goods. A further way in which gender power relations are negotiated and challenged is through the myriad of ways in which staff use various techniques to gain authority within, across and outside of organisational structures (Acker, 1992). The lack of formal authority provides a broader array of opportunities for staff to access and distribute information as well as ways of protecting positions through the manipulation of material considered to be important.

In analysing the ways in which knowledge is accessed, adapted and used by individuals across Sporting Goods, the disruption of the formal hierarchy is evident. The ways in which individuals subvert the formal authority structures impacts upon the reproduction of gender power relations. This is because the organisational hierarchy of a predominantly female shop floor and male management places men in the key, formal, decision-making positions. The sudden introduction of a new MD is the most recent and critical change to disrupt or consolidate the creation of alliances, divisions and relations of dominance and marginalisation, which occur within and across the organisation. The ways in which these emerge are analysed through the groupings of interactions occurring, between men and women, women and women, and finally men and men.

MEN AND WOMEN

Management - 'The 19th Hole'

Knowledge about pay scales and other benefits are confidential, however, the management of this information effects the development of gendered networking and subsequently power relations at Sporting Goods. Pay scales and evaluation mechanisms are inherent aspects of the construction of jobs (Acker, 1992; Adkins & Lury, 1996; Pringle, 1992). These elements are usually identified as gender neutral but have been developed from one particular masculine rationality (Acker, 1990). At Sporting Goods some differences in the allocation of benefits are general knowledge, as the following interviewee describes:

Jack (Senior Management):

"there are a lot of discrepancies, the credit control manager has a car but the distribution manger doesn't; the warehouse manager doesn't but a finance manager does; the golf team get their golf fees paid as well as some other individuals in the company, but other people don't"

The decision-makers for these awards are the various male middle and senior managers within departments to the exclusion of the only female middle manager. In particular the payment of golf club membership fees and the allocation of free kit provide an illustration of gendered mechanisms of control. Such limited access to some benefits is a recurring theme across other organisational research and can operate as one form of masculine closure (Adkins, 1995; Heiskanen & Rantalaiho, 1997; McDowell, 1997).

Knowledge about the individuals who have their golf fees paid is highly protected¹². Further probing through the interviews discloses there is no strategy behind the rationale for this benefit. It emerges, through informal conversations, that all senior, middle and sales managers have their golf fees paid if they wish. Conversations indicate it is perceived as a benefit to the organisation through the development of business but there are no mechanisms in place for the measurement or review of these 'advantages'. In reality only those individuals aware of the benefit can use it. The fact that the only senior or middle manager not to know about the benefit is female, indicates the gendered nature of the control of knowledge and continued restriction of women from the golfing networks¹³.

The selective management of this knowledge operates to maintain an exclusive group of male managers. Even those male managers who do not take advantage of this membership offer still have the choice to join alternative sports clubs, for example tennis. Although there is only one female manager she remains marginalised from this group, isolated from even knowing that she has a choice of sports club membership. Symbolically the rigorous regulation of the boundaries of acceptance by male managers serves to perpetuate the myth that women are both uninterested in the game and cannot play. This kind of logic reflects that across sport more generally, where the male body-masculinity nexus is accomplished through the simultaneous labelling of femininity with different criteria (Connell, 1995; Hargreaves, 1994; McDermott, 1996; Whitson, 1992). The maintenance of difference is therefore regulated by the preservation of different expectations. Furthermore, this practice at Sporting Goods distances women from accessing networks within which business is discussed and developed. As long as

¹² This information arose from a variety of sources; recorded in field notes.

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Access to the golf club network is purported to provide business contacts, but definitely confers a flexible freedom within the context of work hours to those male individuals using it. This dynamic of access to the golf network creates an elite class of men, not dissimilar to the concept of amateur gentlemen in the early 20th Century. This elite class of men had access to sporting networks by virtue of their class membership that provided them with privileged access to monopolise scarce resources (Metcalf, 1988). One aspect of struggle, which the early amateurs contended with, was identifying ways to expand its privileges while limiting the opportunities of other classes to do the same (Metcalf, 1988). At Sporting Goods the senior management team had mobilised resources which were only available to them as a result of their position, to create an elite group. Furthermore, to maintain the group specific access to money and time was necessary. In this way a wide range of 'others' were marginalized from the game. This raises an issue around the use of time and the way in which access to time is both gendered and divided by class.

For shopfloor staff a working day runs between the hours of 8 am and 5.30 p.m. and for managers within these hours and often beyond. Unaccounted for in these hours is time taken off by managers to play sport either amongst themselves or with customers. The female sales manager is attempting to incorporate an attitude which places work higher on the agenda with sport as a reward:

¹³ This was discussed in the interviews with four female managers. None of them were aware of any golfing 'benefits'. One of the female managers had a handicap.

Katherine (Middle Management):

"I have been wanting it to go more the other way in terms of get the attitude and recognition that you work and if you want then to do something that isn't normal to selling [i.e. sport] then you have got to ask for that"

For this manager sport is not assumed to be an inherent part of the working day, as her description of the following conversation demonstrates:

Katherine (Middle Management):

"I heard one of the national account managers say to me, ... just talking about his golf and his passion for golf, he is part of a golf club, so during the summer months that involves he plays a couple of games a week for his club, that involves being on the course at half past four in the afternoon and he had no hesitation or problem in telling me that, well and also telling me more to the point, I think that is the key to it he didn't see that I would view... didn't see any issue in going on to a golf course at half past four in the afternoon and that is a national account manager who gets paid a lot more money than an area sales manager"

This excerpt demonstrates both the willingness of managers to leave work early (by at least 4 p.m. to get to a 4.30 p.m. tee off) and the complete lack of awareness that it might not be appropriate because of the failure of the organisation to censure such behaviour. The absence of censure thereby condones the managers' conduct. Those who do not participate in the golfing networks (i.e. women) work their contracted hours while their male counterparts are failing to do this without receiving penalties. The particular conditions attached to these positions in the hierarchy are not available to women in the same way as to men. They are also not available to men outside of the class of management.

The ways in which these individuals have the autonomy to determine their own boundaries of authority is further extended by a senior manager who has set up a discretionary discount on Sporting Goods golf equipment at his local club. The reason this came to light was because a secretary over heard him talking about it when she took a memo into a meeting¹⁴. She describes the perk as follows:

Natalie (Shopfloor):

"[The Golf Director] annoyed me when he said, it is his golf club, when he said 'oh there is people are allowed 20% off things at the local club', when we were in [the MD's] office and he said that, I never heard that before and I asked him and he said oh yes, well I didn't know that, it was only because it is his golf club and I think it is just restricted to them and them alone."

'The 19th Hole' highlights the ways in which male senior and sales managers experience a kind of autonomy and lack of accountability which is unavailable to women. At the time of the research I would have liked to pursue an area of questioning about whether women challenged

¹⁴ This information was provided in an informal chat, as recorded in field notes.

these arrangements. Since there was no evidence of female managers being aware of these arrangements, it seemed inappropriate to pursue this line of questioning¹⁵. The controlled access to the golfing opportunities continues to restrict female managers from business opportunities within career development and controls opportunities for improving their sporting talents. This issue of conflicting image for women in business has been revealed across other industries such as finance (McDowell, 1997), police (Kivimaki, 1997), insurance (Collinson & Collinson, 1996), nursing (Halford, Savage & Witz, 1997) and betting (Filby, 1992).

The chances for women to challenge these kinds of unequal gender relations, within an environment where they are not always aware of the nature of the issue are slim. Women are not the only marginalized group, however, as men outside of the 'management' class do not have access to the same time or cut price golf. In contrast, access to knowledge is very different between managers and their secretaries. Analysis of these relationships provides insights to why women on a level with male managers at Sporting Goods experience difficulties in transforming gender power relations.

'Darling I'm Home' - The Boss Secretary Relationship

Katherine (Middle Management):

"I have got obviously a secretary, that secretary also manages erm or is managed by the national account controller, a non retail national account manager, a non retail national account controller and four national account managers and two customer care teams."

Sporting Goods is no different in the historical nurturance of the boss-secretary relationship, within which confidences are exchanged and trade-ups occur (Pringle, 1989, 1992). These relationships are not static, but always under negotiation. At Sporting Goods there is a great deal of negotiation occurring now because insecure managers, unsure of their future, are trying to find out more about the new senior management structure¹⁶.

It was ten years ago that Pringle (1989) highlighted the sexualised discourses of femininity, masculinity and the family and the ways in which they effect interpretations of what secretarial work entails and the power relations between the boss and secretary. Her analysis identifies

¹⁵ The ethics around becoming a 'privileged knower' are discussed in Chapter 6, Reflections upon the Process.

the embedded nature of this relationship within organisations and the ways in which cultural processes interplay in the construction of the boss-secretary relations. Ten years later at Sporting Goods similar patterns emerge, as the following quote illustrates:

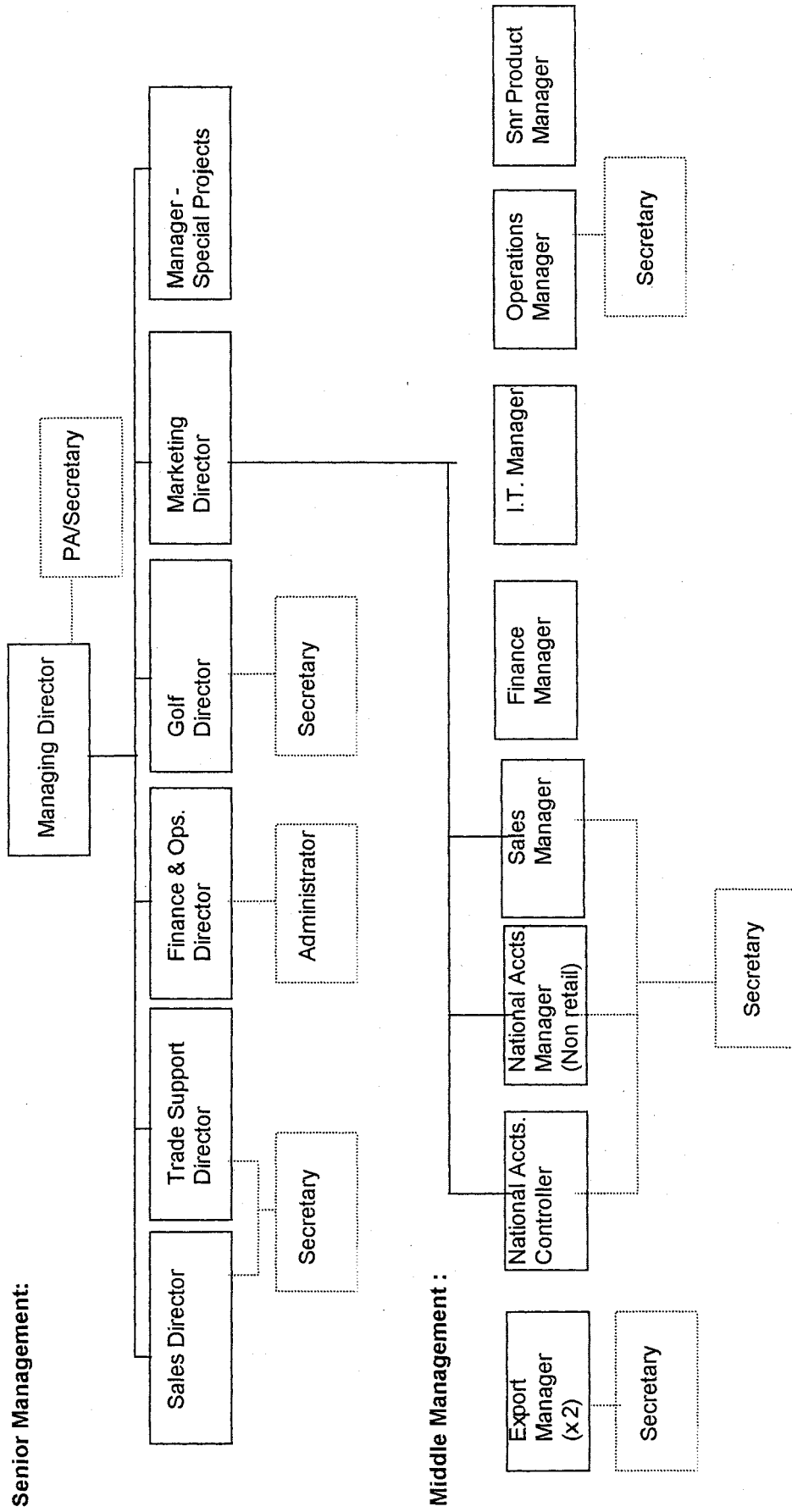
Nikita (Shopfloor):

"He could be sat in his office I could have a chat with him. We would have a laugh. We mess around, he could come round and give me a cuddle, just being daft ... We don't got out as a department. Me and [my boss] go for a drink at the pub but that is about it really."

This kind of husband/wife interaction extends to full briefings on decisions within the department and the organisation. Incidences such as this illustrate that within some relations, the power dynamics have not altered very much over a decade. Pringle (1992) identified how secretaries contradict all the criteria underpinning the formal aspects of organisations, in particular the division between the public world of (a particular form of) rationality and efficiency from the private sphere of emotions and family. Within this alliance, the sexual and personal elements of the relationship opposes organisational rationality, but provides the manager with greater control over his secretary.

Truss (1993) examined the notion of a secretarial ghetto, where secretaries experience a lack of independent promotion opportunities because their future depends upon their boss. The position of secretary can be identified as a ghetto because it is separated from mainstream jobs and is usually dominated by women, as at Sporting Goods. In this way secretaries are separated from the 'normal' hierarchy of authority to which other staff are subordinated (Pringle, 1989). This can be identified in the distribution of secretaries at Sporting Goods, which is demonstrated below. Only senior or middle managers have access to secretaries for support, the dotted lines indicate for whom the respective secretary works.

¹⁶ The secretaries were always willing to impart information about the management team. Secretaries were doing this for two reasons, for their boss but also to identify the likelihood of them maintaining a job. As per field notes.

Senior Management:**Middle Management :**

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The secretarial roles at Sporting Goods reflect elements of a job 'ghetto' (Truss, 1993). Characteristics include the channelling into them by lack of alternative choices; repetitive and routine work; limitation of upward mobility and finally, usual occupation by women. The majority of all the secretaries' work at Sporting Goods was filing and typing, with managers taking on their own diaries. There are also no chances for movement up the hierarchy and women dominate the jobs. It is possible to see how characteristics of emphasised femininity underpin the secretarial roles at Sporting Goods (Connell, 1995).

Acker (1990) argues that inherent to the construction of the abstract 'job' is the separation between work and home and a commitment by the worker to work above all else. These assumptions are laid bare in the following conflict between a secretary and her manager. Unexpectedly her childminder, with immediate effect, could no longer look after her children from school until she returned from work. Although finding a very short-term solution (one week) she asked her boss whether, for the next few months (up to Christmas) she could leave work slightly early. Much to the secretary's annoyance her boss took a week to let her know his decision, which was that she could leave at 4 p.m. for the next six weeks, but after that they would review the situation. The MD did not place any conditions upon her with regard to covering the time she would miss in the afternoon (an hour), but she decided to start work an hour earlier (7.45 am) to ensure she still worked her full week. There was also no attempt by the manager to assess the workload of his secretary or to come up with some alternatives to consider.

In conversations with the MD it transpires that he took a week to return a decision because he forgot about it, not considering it an important judgement in the broader context of meetings with the international board and various financial institutions. The ranking of this as a low priority reflects his ability to distinguish between the public and private spheres of his life. His wife gave up work when their first child was born and has chosen to work at home since then. He talked in one conversation about how smoothly the search for a new house, decoration of it, move from the south up north and placing of their children in new schools had all been handled by his wife. This isolation between the personal private life

and public organisational existence provides the manager with the freedom to work. As Acker (1992), Pringle (1992) and Sheppard (1992) have discussed, this manager's career has been predicated upon a public private split, where his successes depend upon the gendered organisation of reproduction and production. Issues to do with the private sphere are outside of the job of managing and therefore do not merit great consideration. In a broader way family is exiled from the organisation through the complete lack of institutional support¹⁷ provided. The following quote speaks to this point.

Natalie (Shopfloor):

"There is no crèche, there is no, there is no family facilities, there is no family facilities to help you basically, you are on your own, erm so obviously if I, I try not to take too many days off sick, I will come in even if I am feeling ill because I know I need the days in case my children are ill"

The need of the secretary to therefore breach the public/private divide and bring aspects of reproduction into the workplace has disrupted the underlying assumption that at Sporting Goods, production needs are of a greater priority than reproduction. This example clearly illustrates how much control the boss reserves over the time and tasks of the secretary, in particular the way in which she had asked for a few months for this arrangement and he reduced the time period to just six weeks. There is no consideration for the broader issue of childcare and the working day. Clear from this relationship are the gendered aspects of the job, an issue Acker is very clear about:

"a "job" already contains the gender-based division of labour and the separation between the public and the private sphere" (1990, p. 149)

Inherent to the construction of sales and management jobs at Sporting Goods, is the ability to play sport. This is a gendered division which separates the public and private spheres because of the need for complete freedom both during and after work hours to participate. To emphasise the contradictions between the constructions of management masculinity and oppositional femininity, golf is a key example. Sales staff, all male, take time off to play golf, to which there are no time limits, nor does permission have to be requested. Both issues reflect the difference in status of the individuals involved and their ability (or non ability) to make decisions about their use of time. As Pringle (1989) found, there is a need for a secretary to check her hours with her boss which differentiates her from the rest of the office staff and demonstrates her lack of power in this relationship in terms of the governing

¹⁷ Since the beginning of 1999 individuals are legally entitled to unpaid parental leave.

of her time. At the same time, a secretary's difference is marked out by her autonomy from shopfloor staff because of her direct access to the authority giver. Such direct access can become a double edged sword since a secretary cannot go to a higher authority once a request has been denied because at Sporting Goods those managers with a secretary are senior. These unilinear power relations reflect Truss's (1993) analysis of secretary's across France, Germany and Britain.

Contrary to secretaries, the shop floor staff actually can experience greater freedom of working hours. There is flexi-time in operation for office staff which allows them to come in early and finish at four on a usual day. The following individual outlines how it works for her:

Nerys (Shopfloor)

"I get in for 8 o'clock then I finish at 4. Every four weeks, they want the phones covered while 5, so every four weeks it is my turn to cover while five so then I will work up five hours flexi and then I will get to take that maybe week after which I do like that. We normally take them Friday afternoon. We all take it in turns."

Secretaries do not experience this level of autonomy, since they are expected to be present all the time. This is considered integral to their job because of the amount of time senior managers spend off the premises¹⁸. Despite internal dynamics, which point to a lack of influence and independence, externally the PA/secretary continues to be perceived as a unique ally:

Natalie (Shopfloor)

"It is the same with items, people will probably give me things more than they would somebody else because of, not because it is me but just because of the position really they think it carries favour"

Although secretarial work is not as repetitive as some clerical work and they possess the ability to schedule their own workload (Truss, 1993), the secretarial staff at Sporting Goods reflect the manufacturing heritage of the organisation. Remaining an isolated and fragmented group within Sporting Goods their territory is slipping as the organisation moves forward towards customer service. The new MD, during an informal conversation, stated

¹⁸ The expectations of secretaries was standard across the departments. Notes from field work.

that he did not in the long-term future foresee the need for secretaries, as managers should be self-sufficient. This he argued was possible with the support of technology.

As an insight to the mechanisms of control, secretaries do possess more subtle resources than other staff on the shopfloor and continue to be gatekeepers for managers. The familial symbolism adopted by Pringle (1989) is insufficient to account for the multiplicity and complexity of these relations. At Sporting Goods the secretaries do play an important role in the reproduction of gender power relations and this involves the legitimization of a femininity which is characterised by their existence to serve a male boss. Other ways in which women are channelled into service roles is now explored through the changing orientation of Sporting Goods.

'Next Please' - Serving the Customer

As Sporting Goods moves away from its manufacturing heritage towards a new era of distribution and customer service, looking after the customer has become central to the organisation's success. This reflects the move in society towards a consumer base (Filby, 1992; McDowell, 1997). In attempting to look after the customer, clerks need to be up to date with Sporting Goods' latest news releases so that they can present an efficient front to customers, current or prospective.

The exchange of current information is not occurring between management and customer care clerks, either formally or informally. There are no departmental meetings nor is there any information, such as or industry magazines, around the building, on noticeboards or on tables. The lack of communication between management and shop floor creates difficult positions for the predominantly female work force. The lack of information and knowledge being traded downwards suggests managers do not see these staff as suitable for development and does not encourage staff to learn. The lack of training opportunities creates a self perpetuating circle, whereby the clerks cannot improve, thereby fulfilling managers' impressions that they are incapable. One clerk outlines how awkward the lack of information about the company can be:

Nicola (Shopfloor)

"When you have a customer saying well you only bought [a sports manufacturer] for [the willow] farm didn't you, you are like what farm? ... You find things out from your customers, which is wrong because they put you in a position, don't you think. You try not to sound stupid but then again you didn't know."

Although the relevant product information varies between each customer care team, there are similarities in product knowledge. New products are launched each year and this year is the first time that any customer care team has been invited. Still it is not common to all teams, this year it is just golf who are going to the relevant launch. These team divisions are historical and traditionally product information has not been shared between the marketing team and the appropriate customer care staff. This divide has generally been split between male marketers and female clerks, as the following clerk outlines:

Molly (SF Senior)

"Been some trade shows. Not invited. Went to me first product launch this year. First time ever seen the products before I am meant to describe it on telephone without using a catalogue which is an international catalogue and half the stuff in the international catalogue we don't do anyway."

One of the problems at the moment is the development of enough product knowledge by the customer care teams, an issue not assisted by the insufficient supply of catalogues and prices lists. A sales manager believes that management perceives knowledge as dangerous:

Liam (Lower Management)

"They just do not promote from within enough, the impression is that knowledge is dangerous, the longer you are there the more threatened you feel."

A clear contradiction is that managers feel it is appropriate to take time away from the office to participate in sport, to learn more about customers and equipment, yet have not identified knowledge of sport as integral to the development of their customer care staff. Awareness of the products, differences between ranges, differences within ranges, an overview of the ordering process and information on customers, are some elements which would enable customer care staff to provide a better service. Adkins (1995) and Filby (1992) stress the centrality of the interaction between customer and provider to the buying experience, so greater experience of the products would enhance service provision.

The issue of training receives widespread attention in other organisational research. Control to training protects the ability to define what skill and knowledge represents for that job. For instance Cockburn (1983) found that within printing, the masculine ideology elevated male

typesetting skills while deprecating women's keyboard skills. Collinson, Knights and Collinson (1990) in an insurance firm, found women caught in a vicious circle not dissimilar to those women in customer care at Sporting Goods. No selection for training in the insurance firm meant women were less likely to be promoted. Conversely, no selection for promotion meant they were unlikely to be considered for training.

An associated matter for customer care staff is knowledge of how to deal with customers in a pleasant and co-operative way. Again, such information is not imparted through training¹⁹. The concentration of women in this area reflects broader trends within the service industries where women are assumed to have inherent communication and interpersonal skills and are perceived as a distinct form of labour power (Adkins, 1995; Adkins & Lury, 1996; Filby, 1992; McDowell, 1997; Reskin & Padavic, 1994). An individual in the operations department expresses her frustration at the lack of understanding by the customer care clerks about the ordering process and dealing with customers when there is a problem with stock:

Nolene (Shopfloor)

"People up there are just put there .. You have got girls on sales who haven't had any training. They are dealing with customers. They ring up and ask you when something is coming in, oh I haven't got any of those at the moment, well what shall I tell my customer, well with respect that is not my job to tell you that"

Assumptions about the qualities of a good customer care clerk lead employers at Sporting Goods to favour women for this type of work. The segregation of women in the office and men out on the road genders the jobs unintentionally or intentionally. Reskin and Padavic (1994) have identified 'organisational inertia' occurring, which lets unexamined assumptions such as this, affect procedures and practices. Adkins (1995), Halford, Savage and Witz (1997) and Collinson et al (1996) highlight the ways in which boundaries traditionally perceived to separate public from private life no longer exist. Some of the ways in which familial ideology affect the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations are the focus for the next section.

Reproducing the Family

Under-pinning power relations at Sporting Goods are various discourses around an ideology of domesticity and the family. This is similar to Halford, Savage and Witz who found that familial discourses provided a 'significant resource in the legitimization of workplace interactions between embodied participants' (1997; 23). Two incidences are used below to demonstrate the ways in which in very diverse ways, the family is called upon to reproduce gendered power relations which marginalise constructions of femininities from the dominant discourse.

Gaining access: A wide variety of interactions, during the course of a day in an organisation, occur behind closed doors. This invisibility of managers perpetuates the eliteness of management, and reasserts some of the values argued to be central to masculinity, such as separation, control, independence and analysis (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997). One set of interactions that always occurs behind closed doors at Sporting Goods are those recruiting future employees.

McDowell (1997) asserts that analysis of recruitment strategies reveals the extent to which the culture of an organisation is changing. At the financial institutions she examined the tail end of the recession increased the visibility of key assumptions, in particular a reliance upon Oxbridge and public school education as basic criteria. At Sporting Goods, the dominance of men across the senior and middle management positions indicates that those involved at the final decision making stages will be male.

One particular incidence, involving the hiring of a new forecasting analyst in the operations department, represents some of the broader gender power relations operating across Sporting Goods. For the last couple of interviews a middle and senior manager were involved in the interviews with the prospective employee. At this stage interviews with each

¹⁹ Discussions with staff over training demonstrated that very little formal training takes place. Observations as recorded in field notes.

manager occurred separately and the most enlightening conversation appears in the meeting between the interviewee and the senior manager.

Maddy (SF Senior)

"Well lets put it this way, if I had been a different person I could have prosecuted him. He basically said to me have you got a steady boyfriend then, I thought he was just being friendly, so I sort of laughed and said well I suppose you could call him steady. He said well the reason I ask is because I have just taken on a young lady and she had to prove to me, she had just got married and she had settled down with her husband and she had to prove to me that she wasn't about to have children. He said I don't want to take on anybody who is about to settle down and have children. I said Oh. He said can you convince me that you are not about to settle down and have children and leave in two years and will expect maternity leave."

This incident demonstrates the way in which for these particular individuals, the hiring of women occurs within a framework intimately tied to reproduction and their subsequent impossible connection to long-term commitment to work. In 1999, it is possible to identify the impact childbearing continues to have on the way female employees are perceived and as a biological justification for the defence of continual gendered inequalities in the workplace. The maintenance of a public/private divide, through a discourse of the family, reproduces unequal gendered power relations but simultaneously provides one way for them to be managed at Sporting Goods. Halford, Savage and Witz (1997) found in nursing, banking and local government, that it was rare for women with children to move into senior positions. They argue the organisational cultures present a stark choice for women, motherhood or career.

Trading business: A second variation on the theme of women's role in reproduction arises within the context of trade shows. These shows generally last between 3 - 5 days, during which some entertainment takes place for clients. Of late this has caused some upset in the offices because senior managers have inferred that only young, attractive members of the customer care teams should be asked. The following quotes highlight this particular issue:

Nick (Shopfloor)

"This year, perfect example this, the young ones they have asked them if they want to go to a party at the [hotel] on a night time and stay over, the older ones have not been asked. Now to me, does that show you something there that it is basically how young you are and how fit you look?"

Lance (Lower Management)

"we don't get bonuses but I mean I think certain people get perks because they are probably pretty, they are attractive, they flirt, or they agree with everything ... I think if you look around the departments and people say oh well like they will have shows erm and certain people will always go to the same shows and other people won't within the customer service teams"

Some members of the customer care teams are obviously considered suitable enough to go to a corporate event, as representatives of Sporting Goods. The same individuals are not

considered fit enough to be educated and trained to talk to customers, knowledgeably, about the products²⁰. Since the criteria to be asked to the trade show and after show entertainment was a level of attractiveness and youth, these individuals are not going to discuss the product line of Sporting Goods. They will be going to fulfil a sexual role. Physically these women are allowed, in particular settings, to contribute to selling the image of the organisation, but simultaneously are restricted from selling knowledge.

The second set of interactions to be examined is those occurring between and among women at Sporting Goods.

WOMEN AND WOMEN

The majority of women work in the offices at Sporting Goods, a situation reflective of most offices across the country (McDowell, 1997; Pringle, 1992; Rees, 1992; Truss, 1993). At Sporting Goods the prevalence of women in office based, restrictive, repetitive work contributes to a rumour mill. This type of communication provides women with a space within which they are in control outside of managerial authority. Women control the information, can stop or start it as soon as they wish and let the gossip go to any height they wish. In different ways at Sporting Goods this serves to both threaten and support existing gender power relations, the most pervasive of which is Chinese whispers.

Chinese Whispers

At Sporting Goods Chinese whispers are abundant because of the surprise removal of a popular MD. This method of communication provides the predominantly female office staff with their own knowledge network, separate to management's and other formal practices. They differentiate themselves from management by this one method. Integral to the power relations among and between women across the organisation is the sharing/non-sharing of

²⁰ Feedback provided by the customer care teams and management. Field notes.

information through this dynamic. The ways in which some individuals are marginalised from this process throws light upon the characteristics of those integral to the ring.

The ways in which conversations become distorted is explained by the following example:

Nikita (Shopfloor)

"Everybody has a bit of a bitch now and again but you can guarantee who ever you tell 'such and such has really got on my nerves today' they will go and tell her. Then that person comes to you and says 'if you have got something to say why don't you say it to my face'. You think oh, everything is blown totally out of proportion. ... I got a telling off off [my boss] because I said something to a friend, she totally stretched it, then it got stretched by somebody else, and it carried on and on until it got back to [my boss] and what I had actually said to the first person had changed. It was like Chinese whispers."

The tentacles of gossip seem to reach out to everyone I spoke to at Sporting Goods who work on the shopfloor. One employee describes the operation of gossip in the following way:

Nerys (Shopfloor)

"Something can start off as a rumour next thing you know goh she is awful. It is horrible. You just feel like you are at school and you are being bullied. You can feel people watching you."

At Sporting Goods the relations among female staff are not all harmonious and the divide between women managers and shopfloor staff is wide. There appears to be an isolation of those women who are considered managers from those on the shopfloor. The lack of support surprises one of the managers:

Katherine (Middle Management)

"But also while we are on with the male female thing, it is also from women as well. That, we haven't touched on this building yet, erm I find this building quite bizarre in terms of the attitude (her voice got very quiet) and the self sort of fulfilling gossip mongering that goes on. So it is all, from my point of view this about me experiencing resistance from men, you also get it from women as well which I had never come across before, it is almost as though a woman in the sports industry what next, rather than well yeah we have got a woman in there, lets support her."

The assumption made by this female manager is that women are more likely to support, rather than challenge or resist, other women. As with any group of people, there are great variances among and between individuals, and the relationships vary across them. This is reflected in the relations at Sporting Goods, where at times the women care for each other, an emotion not identified among the male staff. Encapsulated within these dynamics is the power of masculine cultures and patriarchal social relations.

Caring and Sharing

Sporting ability has historically provided men with an easy access to a career within the industry. This pattern has been reflected in the sporting prowess of past (male) senior

managers at Sporting Goods. For the first time in many years among the managers is an Olympic athlete who uses the organisation's equipment. She outlines her progress below:

Lucy (Lower Management)

"I went to the Olympics and I obviously was working for the company and I never got a card, or anything. That tells me an awful lot about the type of people that work here ... from the company as a whole was nothing, I got a letter when we reached the semi-final I got a fax from [the then MD] erm to wish us good luck, but prior to actually in terms of a send off or anything like that."

Sporting Goods is involved in numerous corporate deals with athletes (many unknown, some known) which costs the international organisation millions of pounds. The opportunity to market an employee who has reached an international standard for nothing would appear to be golden. There was, however, no attempt to use either the local or industry press to publicise this fact:

Lucy (Lower Management)

"There were opportunities, that is what I, for the company that you know they could have had the press here, they could have had local television, based in [the North], it is an international company with it, you know, manager going off to the Olympics to captain the British team, you know, never really maximised it. They could have had, look back they could have had an update every day so anyone who hadn't seen it coming into work they could have had a table, lay out of the latest standings, did you see the match result was you know, I scored or didn't score whatever the case maybe, plenty of opportunities, they never did anything."

Financially the grant awarded to this athlete was paid directly to the organisation. This meant that her salary could be continuous, as would pension and NI contributions. From a personal perspective though the only individuals to make an effort and recognise the achievement were those on the shop floor, as the following quote indicates:

Lucy (Lower Management)

"I don't like to categorise people but it is your sales clerks, the guys in the depot, the guys in the depot followed every minute of it. It is when you hear what the other girls you know the other girls got cheques or, here is a cheque for £200 for your self, best of luck, whatever, I think they are working for councils, one was in an insurance company. I am not saying for one minute that I wanted a cheque, but the thought."

In this instance the customer care and other office staff all fully supported this manager through her Olympic experiences - some telling her that they cried with her when they lost the medal. In a similar fashion, it is all the shopfloor staff who pull together to make collections upon the occasions of weddings or births. In contrast to the relationships among women, the interactions between men are based around competition and eliteness. These are analysed next.

MEN AND MEN

The location of predominantly male bodies across the organisational hierarchy and in positions of formal authority places their relations within different elements of control to those of the women.

The Meritocracy of Competition

In the warehouse lunchtime football is not uncommon, among the male operatives and team leaders. In a similar fashion they also do a cross word, which according to a couple of the female operatives was confined to the men:

Nell (Shopfloor)

"Been doing a bloody quiz every dinner time that is all they are doing, I am not joking every dinner time all they are doing in that canteen they do a quiz, somebody says they have been doing it for last 6 years! Like if we talk on a dinner time we whisper because we daren't, because they are doing the quiz and I think that has been going on for about six years."

The fact that the women feel they need to whisper indicates that this is a private dynamic among the men. In some ways this is similar to the bonding processes around sporting experiences, in particular those which management under-take. As with the golf club membership, this type of membership is exclusive, because it serves to marginalize all those but a specific small group of men. The role of football in the creation and maintenance of working class culture is well documented (Hargreaves, 1994; Metcalfe, 1988). In this situation football provides a known identity for the bonding of men in the warehouse as a group apart from the women.

The kind of bonding between men which occurs through the vehicle of sport is not necessarily always the type of interaction one interviewee has in mind. One of the male customer care clerks plays a lot of golf in his own time. For his equipment he receives less discount than he can get on goods from a good discount store not far away. He enjoys the game so much that each year he takes holiday to attend a large golf exhibition, at which Sporting Goods always has a stand. This year he saw his boss there, who views his attendance in the following way:

Nick (Shopfloor)

I have always gone down there, I am interested in golf ... last year I saw [the boss] who I work for now, he said look, I didn't know you were coming down. I said I always come down, take a holiday, you took a holiday he said you don't do that next year, come see me, you work for me, you come down works time. You are seeing customers, no problem."

In this instance a male manager automatically extends support to a male colleague when he has been quite content in attending in his own time, with his own friends. Alternatively, no level of support is offered to a female manager demonstrating an interest in the organisations' products within a sphere which could potentially benefit the organisation.

Perpetuating the elite

A pervasive and privileged masculinity which is characterised by positional power, competitions and long hours, dominates among management at Sporting Goods. This is similar to many organisations today (Collinson & Collinson, 1996; Collinson & Hearn, 1997). Within this form of masculinity, men as managers identify with other men who are equally competitive, wish to work the same rate and length of hours and meet tight deadlines. While being exclusive to men fitting these characteristics, all women are excluded, as the following example demonstrates.

The decisions about future employees are decided by senior managers and, as a result of the lack of policy, have become individual choices. The informal strategy for selecting new employees is that all jobs are advertised internally before external advertisements are placed. After this they are placed in the appropriate trade magazines and local and national press. One senior manager describes the rationale guiding recruitment at the moment:

Jason (Senior Management)

Our motivation to recruit these days is very much about competence for the role."

Jack (Senior Management)

"I will hire anybody that is good enough for the job."

"Anyone good enough for the job" provides the individual hiring with complete autonomy to specify the desired characteristics²¹. Reskin and Roos (1990) assert that individuals call upon past experiences to inform current choices. Since the majority of those in decision

²¹ These were comments received from managers in the organisation while chatting informally – recorded in field notes.

making positions come from blue chip, male dominated organisations, this is likely to influence their hiring decisions. Recruitment is central to the drive to 'professionalise' Sporting Goods and the management involved in this are drawn from FMCG backgrounds. This directly impacts their recruitment choices, as the following quote illustrates:

Jack (Senior Management)

"I want a proven marketing graduate, good standard from a good university that can communicate that possibly has had a years branded experience in Nestle for example, or Heinz or Mars, but they are a sports nut. So I don't want a couch potato, they are a sports nut, male or female, it doesn't matter, they have just got to have that affinity for sport."

Elite sporting knowledge and experience, a factor which has been used as a way of maintaining male elitism over the years is now considered redundant however an interest in sport remains one criteria. The elite sporting background operated as an access to networks - the previous board of directors and majority of managers were all sports players or coaches at county level or above. Traditionally sport has provided opportunities for men to network at the expense of women (Hargreaves, 1994; Kidd, 1990). The dismissal of the last MD was the removal of the last high level manager who had gained the appointment through an international playing career. Networking has remained the primary mechanism for recruiting to the board, but business networks are now superseding sporting networks. Although the network has broadened, it remains restricted to a predominantly white, male, middle class group of individuals. Of the current board, five were brought in through business networks and two were recruited through agencies.

The ability to decide what method of recruitment will be adopted falls entirely to the senior management, where the 'accepted' strategy is not always adopted:

Nanette (Shopfloor)

"there has been instances where the job hasn't been advertised internally and they have just given it to someone outside or they have given it to a temp who has been temping in that department, maybe not necessarily doing the job but in the same department they have just offered it to that person."

The informal (building up of relationships) practices described above, in particular the last one, tend to favour men over women as the key sports for Sporting Goods are male dominated. The hang over from this kind of recruiting is that employees are now expected, if not to have skill, to have a love of sport. The assumptions are that men fundamentally know a great deal more about sport than women and are also part of the sporting fraternity,

whereas women pose a challenge. This supports McDowell's (1997) findings within the City, where recruitment practices reflect the extent of change in an organisation's culture.

Even when the formal process is followed, the search for a white, male body is upheld as the following incident concerning a new product manager position. This emerged during a casual conversation with a senior manager in the organisation. Over 200 people had applied and they were down to the last four. There were three men and one woman involved, with the female being the most qualified and, in this manager's opinion, the most able. The Director became involved at this stage, informing the manager making the final decision that **"under no circumstances will you hire a woman"**.

Emerging through the data are some strong images of identities which are crucial in reproducing or changing gender power relations at Sporting Goods. Alvesson and Due Billing (1997) describe identities as always emerging, constructed by a series of meanings which converge at specific temporal and spatial junctions. The ways in which various masculinities and femininities interplay in this at Sporting Goods form the basis for the next section.

IDENTITY

At Sporting Goods identities which emerge as crucial to the maintenance of the status quo are corporate, sporting and sexual identities. All of the organisational identities highlighted as being central to the maintenance of specific gender power relations at Sporting Goods are under continual threat. This is demonstrated through the perpetual negotiation which occurs around their construction and the contestation from other emerging and competing identities. All identities are relational, depending upon various masculinities and femininities for their concrete manifestation (Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997; Connell, 1995).

CORPORATE IDENTITIES

The current corporate identity, relies at the personal level on a mixture of physical characteristics (white, male, heterosexual) and at an organisational level is breaking away from a dependence upon a rich sporting heritage to one based around an inherited professionalism from the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industries. The importance of history to the corporate identity and how it is altering is examined in the context of the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations. The new MD has brought with him a fresh new start, within which he believes the past has no place. The following employee sums this up:

Karl (Middle Management)

"to use [the MD's] term on the first meeting I had with him was I don't care what you have done before or what your experience is or whatever we start afresh from today."

Sporting Goods was established at the turn of the Century. It was set up in the North as part of a larger international organisation, manufacturing sporting equipment and distributing it throughout the UK and mainland Europe. At its peak (late 1960s to the 1970s) there were about 2,000 people employed on one site about 10 miles from the current building. As a result of its size, the organisation became integral in the local community, drawing the majority of its staff from villages around, the men to work in the factory and the women in the offices. Sporting Goods was the largest employer in the town and had great influence over the local economy and division of labour. This is very similar to Pollert's (1981) research of a tobacco factory, which demonstrated how the firm influenced and reflected local employment opportunities. Generations of families became associated with Sporting Goods, links which were nurtured through an active sporting and social club. Other services provided included excellent canteens (one for management, one for staff), bus services for all workers, competitive rates of pay and added extras, such as meeting the various sports and entertainment stars who visited. The reaction to such treatment by workers was intense loyalty and pride in their work²².

²² This information was provided by various individuals who had worked for the company for up to 30 years.

At this time the sales force, which was all male, covered small territories with a high number of independent stores. Lasting friendships grew out of work where decisions were often made not based upon the product, but upon the relationship with the salesman. This kind of relationship mirrors that within the insurance industry, in particular the way in which men elevate aspects of the job which reinforce broader power structures and identity status (Collinson, Knights & Collinson, 1990). Around selling a particular masculinity abounds, characterised by winning new business, challenging environments and the ability to bounce back from set backs. Closer analysis, as with the selling practices at Sporting Goods, reveal that such imagery is deceptive. At Sporting Goods salesmen built long term relationships with customers which depended upon excellent communication and interpersonal skills. Far from having to go out and sell in an aggressive manner, their job involves retaining customer loyalty through peace keeping measures. Yet this dominant aspect of the job receded into the background of the macho picture portrayed across businesses (Collinson et al, 1990; Collinson & Hearn, 1996).

The network of sport was also very small and individuals were usually networked in from army or sporting connections. A long time manager explains this:

Ken (Middle Management)

"When I first came into the sports trade it was the most unprofessional, it was a friends industry, my Dad was an old school, every one knew each other, ex army, ex sportsmen and it was a gin and tonic fun brigade because there was very few competitors."

In the last 10 years the company has undergone many periods of transition. A key change was the purchase of the organisation by a multi-national company interested in other parts of the group, and the closing down of most the factories based in England. The last few years have been a process of consolidation of sites, integration of new technologies and downsizing, practices which are reflective of industries across the UK in the late 1980s and 1990s (Adkins, 1995).

Twelve months before the research began, the international board (12 men) put together a management buy out (MBO) which did not include any staff options. Since then further staff reductions and management changes have resulted in a firm dominated by apprehension, fear and a jobsworth attitude. This is encapsulated by the following employees:

Lauren (Lower Management)

"jobs worth attitudes, people saying I don't do that it is not my job, there is no team spirit, very set in their own little ways, maintenance of the status quo, they are not particularly interested in doing anything differently or listening to new ideas"

Lucy (Lower Management)

"we need to get it shaken up and say come on you know this is 1990s, we don't do things like they did in the 1960s like you seem to think here and, it is like this brochure that is going out today, it was mmmm, don't really fancy doing that, it is not my job, it should be, there is just such rigidity in jobs and things"

Within the context of this shattered past, Sporting Goods is also struggling to retain and gain ground in an increasingly competitive market where the emphasis is shifting within the broader remit of the service industry. The pressure on management at Sporting Goods is immense. New technologies are being implemented to speed up ordering, improve forecasting and retain greater control over stock; new customer care teams are being set up to deal with customers and the competition from other organisation is becoming ever more intense as more products flood the market. The sporting industry is being transformed by the growth of multiples, fast development of leisure wear and the steady eradication of high street stores. An emerging pattern of national chains of retailers is changing the face of the way business is conducted between supplier and customer, and consequently upon the way Sporting Goods conducts its business. All of these demand a culture shift from one where dominance in the market was given and customers were kept at arms length, to one focused on customer care and keen to continually adapt. A manager describes this process below:

Keith (Middle Management)

"It is extremely competitive in terms of marketing and selling and the industry which er has improved, or has got much more professional in the last three or four years than it has ever been in the past, and that has a lot to do with the growth of the high street multiples who are driving it down the bar code root and the much more professional ways of marketing and selling the products."

McDowell (1997) claims that such periods of instability are good opportunities for women to access traditional male echelons. The corporate identity prevailing at Sporting Goods, however, is constructed upon white, heterosexual, male bodies supported by a shared interest in sport. Bodies with different characteristics visibly stand out. The overall profile is described in the following way:

Larry (Lower Management)

"generally most of the guys now, the new guys that come in at area manager level generally now come in from the FMCG business, professionally trained people hopefully with a sporting interest. ... the adverts go through the Grocer or whatever, and they will look at people involved in Kelloggs, Coca Cola"

The precarious nature of the corporate identity is demonstrated through the direct ways in which bodies entering the organisation are monitored by senior management to conform

with a specific identity. For middle and senior management access to Sporting Goods occurs within a series of business and sporting related networks. Out of the current 16 members of the middle and senior management team, two were hired through external recruiting agencies. The rest have been sourced through either sport or business connections. As Collinson and Hearn (1996) describe "the images of intrepid middle class masculinities crucially impact on selection criteria and practices in ways that frequently exclude women" (p. 69). The male dominated management team are now in positions to act as gatekeepers to any new entrants, keeping those not fitting the criteria external to the company. One female manager talks through the 'out there' barriers she experiences working in the sporting industry. Below she outlines what she feels other individuals expectations of a woman are:

Lucy (Lower Management)

"I do feel you have to fight a lot harder, fight your corner a little bit more, you know I have had certain situations where I think things have been raised and probably people involved were expecting to be able to, not walk all over you but have it easier, and the fact that you are not prepared to do that gives people a little bit of a shock. I mean it wasn't easy to start with, as I say being the only female manager and especially in cricket because you know what the bloody hell, these were classic comments, what the bloody hell does a woman know about cricket you know, erm the erm conferences I would be the only woman at conferences with all these blokes"

McDowell (1997) contends that the relationship between a female body and lack of power is part of the reasons women have to act 'like men' to achieve any kind of success. She found that for senior women in merchant banks their gender was in direct conflict with the masculine rationality of the organisation. Furthermore, everyday interactions were masculine in nature which further distanced women from them, constructing them as 'Other'. At Sporting Goods the construction of the female body as Other occurs in most meetings, as one manager describes now:

Lauren (Lower Management)

"I mean I went down to a meeting in [head office] last week and er apparently this guy who is normally effing and blinding, he normally if he doesn't get his own way he has a real temper, apparently sort of curbed his behaviour because there was a female present you see so things like that I think it pours oil on the waters sometimes because they don't eff and blind and jump up and down as much because you are a woman, you are sat there."

This behaviour highlights the female body as both different and out of place. An alternative way in which this occurs at Sporting Goods is through the equations between sporting ability and a hegemonic masculinity. Historically, elite sporting ability has been equally important to the maintenance of a corporate identity which is predicated on the absence of women:

Jason (Senior Management)

"Sports industry has always been fundamentally unprofessional because basically it has always recruited the best sports stars and basically they were great at was hitting a golf ball or tennis ball none of them are actually that good at business."

Maintenance of the myth of sporting excellence is actively reconstructed by some of the senior management in a refusal to move to business on:

Jack (Senior Management)

"so you have got to be a bit of a guru on the industry firstly ... a professional person who is mad about sport."

Being a 'guru' is not an abstract, non-gendered identity however, but is intimately connected to the corporate masculinity. This emerges from one elite female athlete's experience at Sporting Goods and her work history. She had worked for Sporting Goods for five years as a manager and had remained at the same level for the last three years. During the research period she did receive a promotion. Within this promotion, however, she was not offered a similar package to the individual who had left, as she outlines below:

Lucy (Lower Management)

"a similar [pay] issue has arisen over this position. To be honest the announcement should have been last week, but um I have been a stumbling block because to move somebody out of a position, they didn't move somebody out to be fair, the guy resigned, left the position vacant and they have offered the position to me, now the job description is exactly the same, as far as I am concerned the job description is the same the salary should be the same, but it was a long long way short of what he was earning."

This example, combined with all the other female managers leaving the organisation shortly after the research finished, reflect the hegemonic masculinity embodied in the corporate identity. There are contradictions between different men and masculinities across the hierarchy of Sporting Goods, however shifting networks continue to provide management with the power to control the type of individual who will be part of, and contributing to, the corporate identity. The core corporate identity is only one of many identities across the organisation, however the corporate identity is crucial to the reproduction of gender power relations. The ways in which sexual identities protect or challenge gender power relations at Sporting goods are now examined.

SEXUAL IDENTITIES

At Sporting Goods an underpinning heterosexual discourse is maintained through the interaction of three main processes:

- gendered tasks
- heterosexual relations (compulsive heterosexuality)

- homosociability.

The mechanisms within and between these aspects of the hegemonic sexual identity are now explored.

Gendered Tasks

There is a great degree of job segregation across Sporting Goods. The key area where a gendering of tasks within a job contributes to an underpinning sexual identity is within the sales team. As highlighted earlier, although constructed as being central to the bread winning capacity of the organisation and aligned with masculine characteristics, selling within sport has been based upon emotional relationships. Despite this, one small part of the job, the carrying of equipment into shops to demonstrate new ranges, continues to be stressed as a problem for women. Carrying equipment into and out of stores is an integral part of any sales managers overall job but of much greater importance is securing the sale by building up a good rapport with customers, establishing a business relationship and providing sales support. Yet the lifting and carrying is believed to be one of the reasons women have historically not made it in selling. The marginalisation of women from both senior levels and selling positions in the organisation occurred until a couple of years ago:

Leroy (Lower Management)

"Well we now for the first time have a female sales manager. Unheard of in the past, certainly wouldn't have, last generation oh no no no. It was the old gin and tonic, the women are in the office, the men are out selling."

Ken (Middle Management)

"Go back 10 years ago, it was white male 100%. Then it has actually started changing because the likes of Wilson and Head in the rackets appointed national accounts manager who were girls. We sat there, not being chauvinistic, because we used to look at our applications for new area managers for Sporting Goods and I used to say how can a girl carry all the cricket stuff, a guy can hardly carry it all."

The emotional side of the selling is an integral part of a salesman's job, one which they have to nurture every day in every call. Yet this repetitive aspect of the job is rarely referred to by the salesmen. Instead, they also emphasise the incestuous nature of the industry and how acceptance flourishes for those already within the circle, as the following individual explains:

Lewis (Lower Management)

"The sports industry is extremely incestuous. People in this side every one knows each other, know what they are doing. Very very unprofessional. Very different to other industries. It is crazy how it is so unstructured and unprofessional ... people will accept you more if you are from the industry, at least then you know what it is like, you have the knowledge and contacts. You can also get on with people, you know where they are coming from"

Although this emotional bond is being devoured by the spread of national chains, it continues to be used to differentiate salesmen as 'specialists'. The assumption of women inherently possessing these skills is not transferred to the selling field, which continues to be male dominated. In line with Sporting Goods drive to move into a new era of professionalism, a sales manager describes the new sales relationship in the following way:

Katherine (Middle Management)

"my definition of a relationship is in a sales environment a relationship to me is a relationship that you develop where you go into an account and you can have a professional frank sales discussion, that might involve argument, but you come then to a mutual compromise whether you get the sale or you don't get the sale, but as soon as that that er situation is finished then you are still friends because that was business and you can fight cat and dog and all the rest of it but then once it has stopped you go back to well what are you doing this weekend, that doesn't happen here. Relationship here is very much about being friends with these people"

In the arenas of flight attending (Tyler & Hancock, 1998), betting (Filby, 1992) and hospitality (Adkins, 1995), the deployment of these 'tacit' caring skills fail to be valued, either in wages or status, in jobs designated as 'female'. They are also skills which contribute to the sexual differentiation of female workers. Yet here at Sporting Goods they do not operate in the same way for men. The switch in these dynamics whereby the same skills become invisible to a job which is dominated by men highlight the different ways in which men and women are valued as sexual workers. In a different set of relations, but still part of the hegemonic sexual identity at Sporting Goods, heterosexual relations also place men and women in different relations to sex. These are now explored.

Heterosexual Relations

Heterosexual Harassment

As with Past Times, accessing instances of sexual harassment is difficult because of the sensitivity of the issue and the ways in which organisational practices and processes are invoked to delimit such incidents. The only direct harassment which came to light during the data collection at Sporting Goods involved an individual accessing the personnel files and began calling a female staff at home, repetitively:

Maddy (SF Senior)

"I know of at least one person that has been in there and picked my phone number up off the system because she left it unattended. Somebody who has left now but he started to ring me at home because he got my phone number off the system"

This incident arose within a discussion about confidentiality and while the interviewee did not specifically describe this as harassment it was telling that she felt there was no avenue

open for her to take a complaint forward. In terms of gender power relations this leaves anyone who is being harassed unprotected and vulnerable. This is further supported by her later claim that it would not necessarily be considered unusual at Sporting Goods:

Nikita (Shopfloor)

"If I told anybody else here they would just be oh really, so what. ... I am not the sort of person to go running to [the MD] to say this is really disgusting, because it happens all the time."

This is the only specific incidence of harassment which emerges across all the interviews and informal discussions. Reference is made to other occasions when comments are passed between office women and male operatives, as the following employee explains:

Nikita (Shopfloor)

"I go in there, the lads, I mean some of the things they say to me are unbelievable. You wouldn't believe it, I could get them done for sexual harassment"

The reasons for not formalising a complaint for sexual harassment are entwined with the ideological framework governing individual's norms of acceptance for sexual behaviour.

The comments to which this individual is referring are part of the pervasive way in which male sexuality is privileged within most workplaces (Collinson, 1992; Collinson & Collinson, 1989, 1996; Gutek, 1992; Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Pringle, 1989). Furthermore, research has demonstrated the ways in which usually it is men who initiate sexual encounters but women who are damaged as a consequence (Gutek, 1992; Pringle, 1989; Varsa, 1997). Walby (1988) has posited sexual harassment as a patriarchal control strategy whereby women are kept in their place, while Cockburn (1991) argues that men's greater social power conveys sexual authority upon men as a group thereby subordinating all women.

Which ever way it is analysed, sexual harassment involves the entwining of both social and individual power which is embodied in the sexualisation of the female body. The various strategies of control, resistance, complicity or subordination connect the body with the prevalent mechanisms of power (Foucault, 1991). Through the sexual harassment outlined above specific images of men and women's sexuality are maintained as are unequal power relations. Verbal hustle as above is used at Sporting Goods to 'test' female staff, to see how far the jokes can go. Collinson and Collinson (1996) also identified this strategy in insurance firms, where females complained they justified their behaviour by saying the women lacked a sense of humour. Whether women complain, accept, comply or assimilate,

Cockburn (1991) states women are caught in a no win situation, regardless of their strategy for dealing with sexual harassment.

Research has demonstrated that women entering non-traditional arenas experience more sexual harassment (Collinson & Collinson, 1996; DiTomaso, 1992; Sheppard, 1992). The male warehouse staff are marking their territory as separate from the offices and denoting to female staff that they are not welcome in there, if they are it is on their terms. By saying nothing about this behaviour the power within sexual harassment remains invisible and continues to place women as 'other' within certain spaces at Sporting Goods. While not all men are party to this behaviour and their reactions to women are diverse, the existence of any sexual harassment continues to mark the female body in an unequal way to the male body. This heterosexist culture exists through other dynamics, as the following reveals.

The Boundaries of heterosexuality

No questions are raised about the sexuality of any male managers, yet during my time at Sporting Goods comments were made about all of the female managers. The only senior female manager described in the interview how she felt it had been necessary to outline her approach to work to her male sales staff, she did not do the same to her female office staff. At this meeting she outlined how important work was to her and what her expectations were for all of them. Such an approach, combined with her heritage in the FMCG industry, is interpreted in the following way by one salesman:

Leonard (Lower Management)

"I mean the first time she met us she said I am la, la, la, outlined her background and said I am not married, never will be - well we all just thought ooer, you don't say that without a reason."

By adopting the language of masculinity, for example qualities such as aggressive, competitive and assertive, this manager is laying bare the masculinity of management. She is making herself stand out because she is contravening the 'normal' characteristics associated with women. Entry of men into management is taken for granted (Hearn & Parkin, 1988), when women contravene these accepted limits they are directly challenging boundaries of acceptance for both gender and sexuality and laying bare the power relations underpinning them.

The quality of this individual's work is not discussed in similar detail to her private life because the salesmen know she is achieving targets and making appropriate changes²³. They can only view her as a 'man' by reconstructing her around masculine norms, which in their terms is as a lesbian. Any evidence is adopted to support this interpretation of her, such as her comment about not being married. Sheppard (1992) and Collinson and Collinson (1996) all found that women entering previously male echelons are likely to experience sexual harassment.

This female manager's comment about marriage also resurfaces within the grapevine, with staff regularly identifying her as homosexual. Further 'evidence' is furnished, as far as staff are concerned, by her failure to bring a partner to any social she attends. Other male managers attend on their own, however the wedding ring on their fingers serve to quell gossip about their sexuality. More contradictory is the fact that no member of staff ever brings a partner to the socials, but this does not constitute grounds for challenging their sexuality. It is only the female managers who are not in a blatantly heterosexual relationship who have their identity as a manager undermined in this manner.

Other ways in which heterosexual behaviour underwrites relationships across Sporting Goods is through the disapproval of the female managers wearing trousers. The reaction to trouser suits is as follows:

Lauren (Lower Management)

"dyke, I have had that a couple of times, sort of oh you are looking a bit dykish today, or we haven't seen your legs this week, you get all sorts of silly comments like that if you are not completely down the line yeah, they are not used to it."

Since this manager was married discussions went no further than the 'jokes' at her outfits. The banter however marks out the territory of what is considered acceptable behaviour by office staff, defined as 'completely down the line'. This individual can recognise the boundary which is drawn around 'normal' gendered dress codes. In this context 'the line' is

²³ For instance, she had identified sources of corruption among salesmen which were effecting figures and stock control.

being exposed as a mark which, if over stepped, invokes sanctions in the form of verbal abuse.

The manager in the above example was able to recognise that there are boundaries and that sexuality is clearly marked in this workplace. This finding is supported by another female who discovered the boundaries on her first day at work. On a tour of the building she believes that her position within a heterosexual hierarchy had already been determined:

Maddy (SF Senior)

"When I first started [my boss] took me around to meet everybody, and everybody here has got a reputation for something, [the boss] has a reputation for liking blonde women so of course he took me round to meet everybody and it was like emm, she is a blonde what a surprise, obviously no good at the job, she has got the job because she is a blonde, so right from the start you have got to start battling."

Although the treatment of this individual is a result of the colour of her hair, the underpinning heterosexual 'normality' marks out the territory for any women venturing beyond traditional boundaries. By reducing this individual to a sexual object her ability to accomplish her job becomes invisible.

The issue of invisibility and women extends beyond the borders of Sporting Goods and into the industry (Bramham, 1991). In particular the presence of women as sales people on the road is extremely rare. The current sales managers interpret women in the sports industry in a similar fashion to the way office staff react to female managers, it is under-pinned by rigorous boundaries of gendered, sexual behaviour:

Lewis (Lower Management)

"The only women I have worked with have been tom boys. Blokes in women's clothing. One of the reasons she has done so well is that she could behave like a lad, she had a good knowledge"

Liam (Lower Management)

"If there are any females they are always very attractive. The business is completely male dominated. You could write the names of the female golf pros (i.e. running shops on a course, teaching) on a postage stamp. The only female rep I have known was ragingly flirtatious and she used it to her best advantage. Women in golf really is a taboo, they are not taken very seriously. It is true they have to be twice as good and twice as attractive."

The policing of dichotomous gender boundaries rely upon specific constructions of both masculinity and femininity. For those working at Sporting Goods it is when signifiers of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity are traversed that sanctioning behaviour occurs.

A further way in which all staff contribute to the maintenance of compulsive heterosexuality is through their engagement in the social life outside of Sporting Goods. Within the workplace there is very little interaction across the boundaries of departments, behaviour which is broken down at these socials:

Maddy (SF Senior)

"It is strange you get to talk to people more on a social occasion than you do when you work"

Organisationally there is no longer a sanctioned Christmas or any other social so staff now arrange a night out in the local town once every one or two months. Very little is spoken about these occasions, however they are apparently events where everybody 'lets their hair down'.

Maddy (SF Senior)

"I have been on three dos and they have all been the same. Apparently usually the Christmas one is the worst so I have got that one to experience yet, oh no no partners EVER! They are never allowed near ever, I have never known a place like it. ... when you are actually out on a social occasion there are no boundaries if you like, anybody will chat to anybody it is completely different on a social occasion."

It is argued that there are no boundaries at these gatherings, but there are strictly controlled sexual borders within which almost everyone is expected to conform. The following quote demonstrates this:

Maddy (SF Senior)

"it is about 90% of the people that do it so you are better off asking if it is the same people that don't do anything when they go out because it seems like everybody has dabbled. It is all just taken for granted and taken in their stride, there are always people on and off the dance floor, it is real sort of go for it get together and there are always people on the dance floor, people disappear and then come back so there is never just the lone 10% by themselves but yes all these people disappearing into corners!"

Despite many staff being married or living with partners, the attitude to behaviour was laissez faire. In the cold light of day at the office after socials there is never any censoring of behaviour either by management or peers. After these events very little is spoken about the evening's affairs.

Through an ideological framework of compulsive heterosexuality, the borders of sexuality are highly policed, both within Sporting Goods and the larger industry. Various signifiers, through certain constructions of masculinity and femininity, operate to warn individuals that they may be moving towards a certain boundary and these then take on another perspective if behaviour pushes the limits. Verbal sanctions occur in jokes, but these move on to more personal territory when social norms of hegemonic masculinity are stretched. In a different

way homosocial relations play an essential role in the reproduction of a hegemonic sexual identity. This forms the focus for the following section.

Homosocial Relations

Across Sporting Goods there are plenty of opportunities for the development of homosocial relations among men and women. There is little evidence, however, to suggest that women use any opportunities to meet either officially through work or outside of work in single sex social settings. The first time all the secretaries met in their entirety was at a feedback session organised by myself at the end of the research.

Conversely opportunities for men to meet in single sex groupings arise frequently. Predominantly they meet in the boardroom, on the golf course, at trade shows, within the warehouse and between salesmen. As illustrated above where women are excluded from quizzes in the warehouse canteen and also from golf clubs. Homosociability has grown up around the all male sales teams. One middle manager highlights the characteristics of this group:

Katherine (Middle Management)

"it is also driven by the culture of a total male team, it is very different because I find that men feed off one another, they feed their own egos and they compete with one another and they compete with not so much with, they do compete at work to a degree but not as much as I would like and as we are moving towards that, they compete with jokes, things like in the sales environment and with banter"

In a similar way the limited access to golf club membership endorses male homosociability through the exclusive network available, but available to managers. The marginalisation of women from these bonding processes can be rationalised through the broader sport related mentality across the whole golf trade, as a manager explains:

Maddy (SF Senior)

"I mean golf trade unfortunately the women in terms of the golf trade have struggled. ... Because it is a male dominated retailer, I mean it is 99% male. ... It has just been a credibility problem that, are you a golfer, women golfers have a stigma which is unfortunate."

Homosocial reproduction reflects a process whereby individuals recruit and chose to spend time with those individuals very similar to themselves (Reskin & Padavic, 1994). Sport in particular is crucial in the development of male relations (Kidd, 1994; Whitson, 1990)(this is examined in Sporting Identities in greater detail).

This is not to portray a false scene of idyllic relations, there are divisions across male workers at Sporting Goods. At these junctures other social divisions are also operating, for example class and race. One particular example is that of the relationship between the warehouse staff and the salesmen. Neither group has any respect or enjoys working with the other, as the next quotes demonstrate:

Liam (Lower Management)

"the guys in the warehouse - they are relatives of Neanderthals. If you ask them any space questions they don't have an idea."

Niamh (Shopfloor)

"The attitude of some of them, you open a door for them and they slam it in your face. Don't take much does it, thank you."

James (Senior Management)

"I heard the other day just a comment, one of our orders went in, must have Stevie Wonder picking the orders because got it all wrong. I said well did you go find him, well no I haven't, I said well you are sitting in this damn room, Stevie Wonder is just the other side of that wall, why don't you go and find him and ask him why he did it, what he will probably tell you is well you didn't fill the order in properly."

There are similar mechanisms operating within this different group of men however, which serves the same purpose as the golf club, that of excluding women. Among the men in the warehouse, sport is used as a way of relaxing during dinner hours. One of the team leaders describes the activities in the following way:

Malcolm (SF Senior)

"there has been a friendly football match which is, occasionally the lads when it has been sunny will go outside and have a game of cricket which is something again which brings, it is not regular, we might have, half a dozen people might play table tennis now and again, a part from that there is no real organised stuff"

Sexual identities pervade the entire organisation, effecting relations among and between men and women both within Sporting Goods and the industry. Under-pinning these power relationships, sexuality is very much a part of the on going production of gender (Collinson & Collinson, 1996; Gutek, 1992; Hearn & Parkin, 1987; Sheppard, 1992). Beside the reproduction and renegotiation of corporate and sexual identities at Sporting Goods, various sporting identities struggle for dominance.

SPORTING IDENTITIES

Within a week of joining Sporting Goods, the new MD had received his first set of golf clubs and started a course of lessons. Although arguing that 'sport' itself was not an attraction but the industry and the challenge of an organisation struggling to achieve, within a few days he had thrown himself into participating in one of the core sports having always before avoided

the sport business connection. Quite clearly, he realised that this is more than just business and to be in the game he has got to play the game, like the majority of his team:

James (Senior Management)

"almost all the people at a managerial position have a sport and it tends to be either golf or tennis, they have something and they have reached a reasonable level. Either prior to, a couple have been to Loughborough university so come from a sporty background, we have got one or two county tennis players, all the golf teams the sales force are low handicap players."

Sport provides a unique arena where men learn from an early age that to be male is to embody certain physical characteristics which ultimately, if invested in, provide the exaltation of hegemonic masculinity over other men and women (Connell, 1987; 1995). The dynamic of golf at Sporting Goods consolidates this advantage for the senior management team through the dynamic of class. Women managers and male staff are therefore also excluded from the elitist group.

One female manager finds the preoccupation with sport difficult to comprehend since her reason for joining the organisation was not because of the products:

Katherine (Middle Management)

"it wasn't being a part of the sporting environment which is quite unusual, everybody I interview wants to be a part of the sports industry, which I find quite bizarre that that is, not because I am anti sports industry but the fact that they have that as a main motivator"

This confusion reflects the way in which sport operates throughout our lives as a mechanism for the consolidation of men's relationships at the expense of women (Connell, 1995; Whitson, 1990). Not understanding the fascination with working in the sport industry and being focused on the process of selling and achieving targets, is an approach which at some points, continues to be side-stepped at Sporting Goods. The centrality of sporting experience/knowledge continues to be nurtured though by male managers, through their recruiting criteria which is also based upon gendered assumptions about sporting knowledge.

The 'naturalness' of sport as a site for the legitimization of male power (Hargreaves, 1994), where values of aggression, power and strength are protected and nurtured, emerges through the various sporting identities constructed at Sporting Goods. Hegemonic masculinity, a highly competitive and homophobic form of masculinity, operates to subordinate any other expression of masculinity, both on the shop floor and among

management. This strength is demonstrated through the processes which marginalise the emotional aspect of salesmen's relationships with their customers. Such a characteristic, through a logic of difference, is usually aligned with femininity. Traditionally, and at Sporting Goods, such characteristics are marginalised through the rules and common sense notions which connect sport with manliness, strength, power and sport. The use of sport as a conversational tool offers common territory for the establishment and development of relationships between the salesmen and their customers. Sport offers a bridge so far at times that decisions are made on the basis of relationships rather than quality of the product, as the following sales person describes:

Katherine (Middle Management)

"if you had a terrible product in the grocery industry then you would be more judged on that product and less on the person, within the sports industry if you have a terrible product then to a degree a person can influence getting it in because of their relationship with the retailer. To a degree. So therefore when you lose a lot of people as well you lose those relationships"

The association between emotion and trading relationships is thought to be surprising by one manager:

Katherine (Middle Management)

"a sports industry thing, and that is what I hadn't anticipated because of being quite involved in sport within school erm I thought I knew sports .. it is a very emotional industry, very emotive, in that they are people often say the sports industry is very relationship led"

'I thought I knew sports', a statement which speaks to the embeddedness of hegemonic masculinity and hidden matrices of power relations elevating male relations while subordinating female relations. Her jettison into a sport organisation, set up around male dominated sports, reveals the gendered experiences in and through sport. The marginalisation of the hegemonic sporting identity for women in the organisation also emerges through their exclusion from the golfing networks and lunch time sport activities. At Sporting Goods the culturally idealised form of femininity does not include sporting experiences.

CONCLUSION

I adopted Acker's (1990, 1992) framework in an attempt to examine Sporting Goods as a set of gendered processes within which gender and sexuality are obscured through an asexual, gender neutral discourse. The majority of organisational structures usually found in organisations (such as job descriptions, salary scale, equal opportunities policy, disciplinary

procedures, grievance procedures, benefit packages) are absent. The only formal arrangement is that of the organisational hierarchy where male bodies are positioned in the top half while the warehouse is full of male bodies and the administration/customer care jobs are dominated by women.

First impressions of the organisation mirrored the organisational hierarchy, with active male management bodies and passive female bodies at desks. Life size images and pictures, all of male athletes adorn the reception and communal hall area. These sporting representations are supported by the management casual clothes. Any other men working in the offices (IT, Finance and two in customer care) are clearly demarcated from most women by their 'uniform' which consists of a shirt, tie and smart trousers. Even more visible are the female managers and a female operations specialist, all of whom wear suits. They are differentiated from the smartly dressed receptionists who are confined to the front desk and phone.

The next most visible divisions of gender occur across space. The layout of the work environment presents some highly visible gendered boundaries, such as the board room and the lunch box. Equally powerful is the non-use of space in creating and maintaining gendered relations. Managers' absence marks out the control they have over their time in contrast to subordinates. The invisibility of the warehouse, locked away behind a secure door, hides the physical side of the operation.

The concept of the '19th Hole' provides insights to the ways in which elite circles are created and perpetuated for male managers. Tightly controlled knowledge about membership benefits circulate among the men. The lack of opportunity for women to join this, to benefit from the playing experience and also the business development, serves to sustain myths of their disinterest in sport and inability. In a different way, the management of women within Sporting Goods emerges through an analysis of the boss-secretary relationship. Although having the opportunity to access information networks beyond most women on the shopfloor

(although this can isolate the individuals), they are also far more restricted in their working time than other staff. The access to their bosses comes with a price tag of control.

Across office staff, key characteristics of an emphasised femininity (youth, attractiveness, passiveness) appear as the criteria for socialising with clients. Although not considered for business development opportunities through customer care training, young female office clerks are asked to attend a corporate event and represent the organisation. The day in, day out skills necessary to their job (customer care) are clearly considered 'natural' through the complete lack of training. Such stereotypical assumptions support an emerging logic of difference in the capabilities of men and women across Sporting Goods. This logic underpins the criteria for selection of future employees, where white, male bodies are at the top of the desirability lists.

Female sporting excellence does not benefit from the same kinds of access as male ability does. Rather than shouting about the achievements, they are swept under the rug, as if getting to the Olympics is a perfectly normal occurrence. Sporting achievement for women in the organisation are not valued in the same way as male accomplishments, but are kept at a distance so that no comparisons may occur. In contrast sport provides numerous opportunities for men on the in the warehouse and at management level to bond both within work hours and outside and is consolidated by the extra dynamic of class. The sporting identity is acceptable and strengthened by class characteristics. As such, sporting characteristics remain part of the selection criteria for future employees.

Across Sporting Goods three key identities emerge. The corporate, sporting and sexual identities were the most critical in the reproduction rather than transformation of gender power relations. These identities are most visible when they are under threat, such as from an ambitious, single female. A fourth identity, which contributes to the reproduction of male advantage, is class. At Sporting Goods there is almost a dynamic of polarisation occurring across class, with the working class men in the warehouse sharing experiences of football in

the yard while the senior management team go to expensive golf clubs to bond and network with other players.

The corporate identity, despite years of organisational upheaval, is just breaking away from a dependence upon elite sporting prowess as criteria. This bond has only recently been broken, but the wounds continue to be nurtured by some individuals. This can occur because of organisational failure, particularly the lack of open and formal procedures. The under-pinning assumptions of public/private divisions have been built up historically on men's typical life patterns, dependent upon domestic support. This 'mobilisation of masculine bias' (Burton, 1992) is fundamental to the corporate identity at Sporting Goods. The corporate image is one of white, active, heterosexual men, within which the only room for women is at home supporting. Solutions to the possible entry of women to challenge this identity are for the sporting identity to recede in to a subtler, background role.

Alternatively, the sexual identity may then come to the fore. This can provide a larger resource since policing of sexual boundaries can come from men and women across the organisation (in contrast to sporting identity which remains restricted to men). The sexual identity reflects the myriad of ways in which sexuality is entwined with the ongoing construction of gender and calls upon the body in a much more obvious way on a daily basis. It also demonstrates how integral physical aspects of the body are (how individuals move, how they present themselves) to the construction and negotiation of gender power relations.

Sporting Goods, as a privately owned sports goods firm, reflects the male dominated characteristics of both commercial organisations and sport. While constructions of the body underpin all the discourses and relationships unravelled, the most potent image to emerge as securing the reproduction of unequal gendered power relations is that of identities.

CHAPTER X

SPORT, GENDER & ORGANISATIONAL POWER RELATIONS

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SPORT, GENDER AND ORGANISATIONAL POWER RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Drawing upon a comparative study of two sport organisations, a public leisure centre (Past Times) and a private sport manufacturer and distributor (Sporting Goods), this thesis explored the extent to which gender power relations are reproduced or transformed. A great deal of changes have occurred in the work place over the last half century and women now work in a much wider range of occupations and professions than at any other point in history. However, many traditional gender divides remain (Adkins, 1995; McDowell, 1997) and the subtle and not so subtle ways gender divides are maintained are visible in a sport employment arena.

The study across the public and private sectors provided the opportunity to examine possibilities of difference of women's position in the labour market and to explore whether, because of the greater shift in the work opportunities for women in one case as opposed to the other, gender power relations were being transformed or reproduced. Furthermore, if they were being transformed it would illustrate the under-pinning dynamics of change and the ways class interacted with gender to confirm or challenge inequalities.

The contrasting case studies posed possibilities of difference in the dynamics of men and women's relationships in the labour market but, despite this, gender power relations were not transformed substantially in either study when compared to traditional patterns. Masculine hegemony was maintained in these two case studies through three critical component parts of an over-arching structure of gender: bodies, identities and sexualities. The body was the fulcrum for the interaction of these three interacting, dynamic components. The following chapter discusses how various aspects of these three components interact to reproduce gender power relations through work practices and concludes by reflecting on the future for research on gender in sport-related organisations.

'SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE': THE MAINTENANCE OF MASCULINE HEGEMONY

While falling within the same industrial sector, that of sport, Past Times and Sporting Goods represent two highly differentiated businesses and rationales for existence. At the time of the study this traditional division between these sectors was changing, as wider capitalist pressures came to bear on local authority finances and Sporting Goods was forced to focus on providing a customer focused service. Past Times, as a contracted out centre, was being forced to become more financially and commercially aware than at any other time in its history, an era where profit related goals over-ride service provision, a twist which takes the sector back into territory historically male dominated.

In contrast, Sporting Goods existed for profit. More recently the impact of globalisation is reflected through both the transfer of manufacture abroad and the shift of their core business from manufacturer to customer service. The focus remained, however, upon distributing products which provided the greatest return for investors. Sporting Goods remains an archetypal, capitalist organisation driven by male defined goals and boundaries.

The distribution of men and women across management varied between the two case study organisations. Women and men were equally represented in the public organisation but women only just made an appearance in the management structure of the private organisation. As the two case studies demonstrated, despite the contrasting organisational structures, gender power relations have not been transformed in one case rather than the other and masculine hegemony continues to dominate in both cases. The critical difference between the two organisations is that at Past Times men overtly resist any change in gender inequalities, while at Sporting Goods men do not have to resist because of their continuing numerical dominance. Furthermore, class acts as another dynamic to both fragment and polarise identities in such a way that women continue to be marginalized from the dominant discourse. The value of this thesis as a whole therefore arises from peeling back the underpinning dynamics of the reasons for reproduction rather than transformation of gender power relations.

Unravelling in the following section is the extent to which gender power relations are not transformed at Sporting Goods or Past Times. The differences and similarities in the dynamics of gender power relations become clearer through the active strategies employed by people often covertly resisting, occasionally overtly challenging, the dominant relations.

'AGAINST THE FLOW': STRATEGIES OF RESISTANCE

An understanding of the dynamics of gender relations in this study became evident through a range of strategies where every interaction, daily activity, conversation and process impacted upon the way individuals perceived their role within the organisation, and played their part in the ongoing construction of gender power relations. In both case studies there were many examples of men in positions of authority using strategies to maintain their power, while women tried to work within or outside the system to survive. In the same vein, there were examples of women and men contributing to continuing practices of segregation and alienation of individuals who did not conform to stereotypical expectations of 'normal'. The construction of 'normal' centred upon traditional, stereotypical gendered norms for men and women. Various strategies adopted in the reproduction of normal relationships inform us about the ongoing construction of gender power relations and the ways in which everyone contributes to their reproduction.

The power of these strategies stems from everybody playing a part. The various strategies that emerged from the case studies revealed how myths of gender become reality and offered a more comfortable pathway to follow. Myths of gender emerged as perceptions of male and female roles which are rooted in perceived 'natural' characteristics. These myths gain credence from the continuity of gendered role allocation across time as well as from fragments of class identity. The adoption of least pathways of resistance partially reflects why existing boundaries of gender relations go unchallenged and are not transformed. In summary, I found the following critical strategies were adopted by men and women across the organisations in the reproduction of gender power relations:

- Trivialisation
- Marginalisation

- Subordination
- Complicity

TRIVIALISATION

The most powerful way in which trivialisation occurred was through the consistent stereotyping of men and women's roles at work. Stereotyping homogenises gendered skills and capabilities, thereby creating illusions of gendered divides. For instance at Past Times both male shop floor managers and female senior management continued to position women in child caring roles and men in physical, equipment positioning roles because of a belief that these people are happier in these jobs. At Sporting Goods the most common, visible way in which stereotyping under-pins the reproduction of gender power relations is in the positioning of women in care and service roles and men in physical and management occupations.

Past Times could be marked out as groundbreaking within the broader leisure industry because it has a senior female management team over and above the centre manager. However, while these women are in positions which offer opportunities for them to break such cycles, stereotyping continues and the trivialisation and low value of care roles persist. This pattern reflects the presence of factors prohibiting female managers from engineering change, in particular the pressure from all those around to conform to life as 'normal'. Female managers continue to be highly visible against the backdrop of male dominated management teams. Female attempts, therefore, at any kind of change are far more likely to attract attention and the change is put down to their gender rather than their management skill. The experience of female managers being very aware of their gender, and male managers also focussing on female gender reflects how closely the notion of hegemonic masculinity and the workplace are bound together.

The home is brought into the work place through daily routines. The concentration of women in the domestic area of work supports the myth that the care of children is inherent to women but not to men. However, the fact that this work demands staff qualifications, high awareness of health and safety, and regular physical labour, is ignored and trivialised. Researchers like McDowell (1998) argue that the re-organisation of work across service industries offers

opportunities for change of the distribution of gendered power relations. While men and women continue to be concentrated in stereotypical roles, jobs which the service industry fundamentally replicates, changes in attitudes and understanding are unlikely to shift.

MARGINALISATION

Marginalisation emerged as a strategy used to maintain distances between particular groups of individuals to reduce their access to decision-making and relationship-building environments. Marginalisation was used by various groups of staff across the organisations to maintain circles of exclusivity and perpetuate bonds which originated from the workplace but at times took on lives of their own outside the organisations. By using sport as the tool of meeting, the homosocial relationships among men transcended any questions of irregularity. Similarly, groups of women buying presents for those leaving, pregnant or getting married also fulfilled historical notions of domesticity and gendered expectations. While certain groups of women celebrate the achievement of domestic responsibilities, male socialising tended to celebrate workplace relations and independence. In further confirmation of what is popularly perceived as a 'natural' divide, such gendered festivities perpetuate stereotypical expectations of gendered body capabilities.

Networking in business is a historically masculine activity, which has always been a part of the business environment. Traditionally these relationships were extended over office hours and men's clubs (McDowell, 1998). However, in the face of change in the workplace, these relationships have moved to separate clubs. The theme of exclusivity and extension of homosocial relationships prevails across the boundaries of home and work, blurring the links for men. Similarly the extension of invites to wives, marginalizes those women without partners. Women therefore have to find a way of doing gender which constructs them as both acceptable and different within the workplace, because their crossing of the boundary between work and home starkly marks them out as different to the hegemonic norm. For example, while conforming by wearing a skirt suit, they also wear make-up and earrings to maintain a link to established practices of femininity.

Networking within and across businesses remains one of the key ways in which working relationships are established and built. In particular this is an integral part of the maintenance of the masculine business environment, further supported by elements of class identity. Networking, although on different levels, occurred in both companies between men while women were marginalized from the groups. At Sporting Goods senior management played golf together and also benefited from subsidised club membership. These relationships were consolidated by the dynamic of class, through the notion of amateur gentlemen. The characteristics of this identity served to mark out the managers as different from both women and other men. At Past Times the shop floor management used relationships developed through social sports, such as football, to determine allocation of over-time and shift promotions (i.e. from leisure attendant to senior leisure attendant). In a similar way the working class culture of football strengthens the lads identities as different to the women and other male staff.

The legitimization of work relations extending over the boundaries of work time is a critical strategy which reaffirms women's difference to men across all levels of staff, perpetually marginalizing them from opportunities to consolidate business relationships.

SUBORDINATION

Abstract spaces, as well as physical spaces, reflect various practices and constructions of gendered power. In many ways, the absence of bodies across different spaces provided more of a message about gendered power relations than when bodies occupied the space across the case studies. The subtler dynamic of subordination emerged from the different ways in which various groups in both case studies used space and felt they were restrained by gendered barriers. In both organisations the juxtaposition of visible/invisible acted as a potent tool for the reproduction of gender power relations.

Historically, part of the process of moving up through an organisation was obtaining your own office space, a process which simultaneously indicated your new stature. There has always been a linear relationship between the size of office space and perception of an individual's

level. At Past Times this space was taken away from the duty managers to make them more visible and directly responsible for the shop floor. In response, the duty managers' resistance was to find other space, further away from the shop floor where they could not be found by shop floor staff. Rather than being perceived as a shrewd management decision to ensure that the shop floor was closely monitored, the discourse focussed on the gender of the manager making the decision, rather than the rationale for the change itself. In this way female managers were discredited and subordinated in day-to-day exchanges.

The same theme of management invisibility arose at Sporting Goods. While all staff were in open plan offices, senior managers had their own office space. When their doors, or those to the boardroom were closed, everybody knew not to enter. The invisibility of the transactions (as with the duty managers at Past Times) thereby occurring in these spaces endowed them with power, gendered because it was always male dominated.

Common to both case studies were the ways in which accepted practices around the adoption of space, re-constructed gender power relations to subordinate the majority of female work practices, while perpetuating masculine habits as normal and acceptable.

COMPLICITY

The most challenging aspect of demonstrating complicity as a strategy in perpetuating norms across the two case studies, was that until the boundaries are visible it is impossible to identify the defining issues. What makes boundaries visible within organisations are the policies and records. At a policy level within each organisation, there were very different approaches to the maintenance of policies and records. At Past Times, as would be expected of a public organisation, there were a great number of policies and regulations, the majority of which were maintained by the local authority prior to CCT. The management believed that these were adhered to and staff aware of them, part of an operating myth which allowed management to withdraw from challenging the norm.

Alternatively at Sporting Goods, very little time was spent on such records; there was no personnel officer and no-one knew of any company handbook or manual outlining procedures and processes. Training in recruitment, equal opportunities and awareness of anti-discrimination policy was non-existent, which allowed old practices to continue unchecked. Mythical beliefs, which contributed to the reproduction of gendered power relations, therefore remained uncontrolled and were accepted as the norm by nature. This was reflected in the recruiting practices and types of gendered questions asked of applicants.

While equal opportunities policies theoretically provide a level playing field for those applying for jobs, deeply ingrained gendered prejudices are not affected by policy. Despite very different approaches to policy maintenance across the two case organisations, the end result was the same. Recruitment patterns reflected this, whereby at Sporting Goods women dominated office positions and men management positions, while at Past Times women outnumbered men in part-time positions. This reflects two main issues. One that expectations of individuals looking for jobs are standard across industries, i.e. that men and women have gendered ideas of the type of employment they can expect to obtain. Secondly, it also indicates that those selecting staff have preconceived notions of candidates and the attributes they bring to the workplace as gendered individuals. In this way, individuals on both sides of the recruitment process comply with gendered norms and expectations.

Female managers argued that they had not experienced any problems through being female in their line of business. Dressing in skirt suits, wearing make-up to look smart and trying hard to 'fit in', all demonstrated how alien they in fact were within the business environment and how they played by male generated rules. These managers were not willing to acknowledge that difficulties persist and they have to work hard at maintaining their place. When anyone was asked about the impact of gender on their work experiences, the default assumption was always that it was women I was asking about. In particular male managers talked about the barriers being down for women, but never referred to issues experienced by other men. These findings reflect the existence of naturalised feminine characters which are continually judged against a male norm. Ways in which the male norm is more obvious emerges through the importance of being in a sport environment.

At this juncture, the fact that both organisations fall within the sport industry and the level of impact which this has upon the reproduction of gender power relations has remained relatively unexamined. I now examine whether this emerged as having an effect upon the way that gender power relations are constructed at Past Times and Sporting Goods.

BODY BLOWS: THE SPORT-BODY NEXUS AT WORK

Turn to the back page of a newspaper and usually the archetypical modern athlete – a white, tall, slim, muscular male will greet you. This image represents what sport means to the majority of the British population. While the representation of other groups of sports people has improved, the press remains focused upon the 'achievements' of able bodied, muscular men. Images like this, and those present in the reception area of Sporting Goods, reinforce on a daily basis the gendered boundaries of difference rooted in the body which underpin gender power relations.

This centrality of the physical body in sport and the role that the sweating, living, muscley body plays in differentiating between gender appropriate behaviour is an important reason for conducting the case studies in the sport industry. Sport provides a centre stage for examining why some distinctions become so important in the maintenance of gender difference and the legitimisation of female inferiority and male superiority. In sport visible physical differences become exaggerated and are used to substantiate social prejudices and attitudes, but unknown was the extent to which such influences transferred into the world of sport work.

While the prevalence of images is a visible way of marking the popular contrasts which uphold common differences between men and women, more subtle dynamics of boundaries of difference emerged through the construction of ability. At both Past Times (via the squads) and Sporting Goods (through the constitution of the warehouse workforce) there was an assumption that men were physically more able than the women staff. Simple gendered dichotomies were relied upon as an explanation of work distribution. This is no different to any other work situation. Historical biological 'truths' are relied upon to judge the physical

abilities of all men and women. It was not, however, in the most obvious forms of work that the influences of sport on the reproduction of gender power relations were to be found.

The power of sport to provide bonding among men is a well-known and reported fact (Connell, 1995; Hargreaves, 1992; Whitson, 1995). Although first impressions suggested that sport was a red herring in the patterning of gendered relationships, it became evident by the end of the research that sport was crucial in the maintenance of an ideology of a 'natural' divide between men and women.

The sporting tradition is a male institution, both from the number of men involved and the values naturalised on the field and in the changing rooms. These 'traditions' are vital for strengthening male identity and were equally viable on both the shop floor and the management table at the case organisations. Success at sport, whether real or verbally constituted, provides a mechanism of bonding and character affirmation for men while providing successful sporting women with a myriad of confusion and boundaries (Bryson, 1997; Cole, 1990). However, while the physical successes are accepted for men, they become a circuit of negotiation for women. Success for women in sport carries neither the same amount of kudos as it does for men, nor the confirmation of physicality. Rather than, as in male sports, success celebrating physical prowess, female achievement highlights silent boundaries of body shape acceptability. The boundaries of femininity include beauty, elegance, and toned muscles. The fear demonstrated by a number of female managers in making known their involvement in high-level sport reflected their fear of challenging such barriers. This occurred across both organisations to women in both traditional and untraditional sports because they feared that their sporting prowess would reflect negatively on their image.

The very fact that the two organisations were located in the sporting environment provided an elevated starting point for definition of masculine character. Images of athletic male bodies dominated the reception and hallways in Sporting Goods, reinforcing the hegemonic norm for sporting achievements. Sporting identity, as a demonstration of normality, provided men

across the case studies with greater organisational kudos, even when there was no sport experience to support it. In particular at Sporting Goods there were examples of men with no experience of golf being invited to days out, while women with playing experience were neither invited to the day or provided with the same club benefits as were available to the male managers. The perceived need by male managers to protect these homosocial occasions reflects how critical the institution of sport continues to be in reaffirming differences between men and women. In these circumstances, not only does sport proffer opportunities for the development of male relationships (here homosocial relationships), but it is also where a great deal of business talk and transactions occur. Consequently, women miss out from the camaraderie, networking and business opportunities. The perpetuation of strategies of control, such as this, reproduces gendered meaning and subjectivity. More insidious is that the boundaries around such opportunities are silent because they remain invisible until experienced. These case studies demonstrate that sport, as an institution, plays a crucial role in the perpetuation of silent gendered boundaries around the notion of expectation. Men play golf in this example because they are expected to be able to play. Whether the individual concerned can play or not is almost irrelevant. In contrast, the women could be the best player on the circuit, but they are not asked because they are not expected to be able to play. In this way, sport, an integral aspect of popular culture, is a critical tool in the development of gendered relationships at work. Sport becomes a route for flaunting physical achievements, which act as confirmation of masculinity.

The last few points focus attention towards capability of the body. The apprehension demonstrated by female staff in publicly celebrating their sporting successes reflects the battle for control of the body, which is at the centre of gender relations and sporting achievement. On the sports field the celebration of masculine hegemony and emphasised femininity is over-documented. The challenges experienced by female athletes pushing the boundaries of body size, shape and image reinforce where the boundaries of acceptability lay. The ways in which female managers at Past Times hid their sporting excellence reveals the extent to which silent gendered boundaries exist. Women managers in the public services, we are told, are not uncommon. So why are they so concerned about being upfront

and honest about their achievements outside work on the sports field? This is because they know they are still considered less acceptable, both as a female manager and as a female sportswoman.

I was driven at the start of this study by the concept of the 'body' and the role the body played in the reproduction or transformation of gender power relations. Despite, however, setting out to unravel the role the body played in these dynamics, it was exceptionally difficult to locate. Even though through conversations, body image, body language in meetings, looks, everything was analysed for messages concerning the myriad of ways in which the body influenced gender power relations. The elusiveness of the body is a major issue since it demonstrates that our physical being is so taken for granted that it eludes us. It is virtually impossible, therefore, for us to challenge how it impacts upon the way in which we structure our lives, how we conduct our daily activities and how it is the foundation for the reproduction of difference.

Across both case study organisations the context of sport proffers a significant environment for the maintenance and reproduction of a logic of gender difference. While sporting identities, earned or imagined, are a given for men, they remain a continual challenge for women in both organisations. The elusiveness of the body demonstrates that the sporting body at its most abstract upholds the strongest gender divides.

While I have focused upon the ways in which sport encourages male homosociability and more broadly is a site for the legitimisation of male power, I also highlighted the struggles around the construction of hegemonic masculinity through the sporting body. For female managers rather than the link with sport occurring through the construction of emphasised femininity in direction opposition to hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995), the examples highlighted almost masculinising experiences thereby reducing the likelihood of sport forming a part of their organisational persona. An important dimension in the construction of the gendered body through sporting and work relations in the case study organisations was that of sexuality. This is now addressed.

SPLIT IDENTITY – THE DIMENSION OF SEXUALITY

As I have established, the sporting body is a significant site of battles for control between and among men and women and serves to strengthen boundaries which otherwise remain silent. As the media representations of Anna Kournikova have demonstrated over the last year or so, representations of sexuality are irreversibly entwined with sporting images. Critical for this study, is whether sport highlights the norm for sexuality, what the norms are and how this impacts on the reproduction of gender power relations through the two case study organisations.

The role of sport in the reproduction of a socially preferred body beautiful has been widely debated (Cole, 1993; Connell, 1995; Hall, 1996). As Andrews (1993) eschews, the construction of knowledge networks specific to sport create and police sexual identities and desires in particular ways. For instance, sport boundaries of 'normality' are laid bare when challenged by the likes of Jane Crouch (boxer) and Renee Richards (a transsexual tennis player). Silent boundaries of sexuality are strengthened through sport. Barriers of acceptability are far more visible, for instance as in walking into Sporting Goods, the image of sport is male and muscular. Sporting identity represents very different experiences for men and women in the case studies and impacts in varying ways on their sexual identity. One common theme running through the sport organisations was that while men's sexual identity was taken for granted, women who did not conform to strict stereotypes experienced challenges to their sexual identity.

This experience was enhanced in a sporting environment because the focus was always on sport. It is summed up by the following female manager's experiences:

A female sales manager in one of the case studies was an exceptionally successful manager in a blue chip organisation (the ideal candidate as described by a senior manager). She was hired to 'clean up' the sales force. She did not play sport, was not married, was very good at her job and stated her commitment to work regularly. She did not wear a wedding ring.

The opinion of the work force: she had to be gay.

While a crude cameo of operating philosophies at work, it summarises the ways in which judgements were made in these case studies. This employee disagreed with the way in which sport was used to socialise with both other managers and some customers. To introduce what she considered a level of professionalism to the way of operating, she attempted to counter the dominant work ethos by explicitly stating her commitment to the organisation and distancing herself from using sport for business. This strategy ultimately alienated her from her team. Her loss of credibility, however, did not come from her refusal to play sport. Instead her perceived lack of integrity was put down to her sexuality, a powerful theme which surfaced throughout both case studies.

A further way in which the sport organisation reproduces gender power relations is through the way in which success in sport is interpreted. As described earlier, success in particular sports for women is celebrated, however for women who excel at sports which are not perceived as 'female', their transgression evokes greater penalties. While female excellence is accepted if not celebrated in some areas, e.g. tennis, hockey, it occurs within strictly regimented boundaries of gendered expectation. When women do excel in accepted sports, but deviate from the 'norm' in terms of dress, behaviour or body shape, one of the most common grounds of attack relates to their sexual identity.

In both case studies successful female managers were constructed as sexual deviants. This resulted from their job successes but also from their lack of children and perceived rejection of 'normal' family life. Sport proffers extremely strong images of heterosexuality through its projection of male sports stars, images which were reaffirmed through cardboard representations every time you entered Sporting Goods. The sexual issue is critical for successful female managers in negotiating their way through organisations. While competence at sport would add to men's work identity, women in a similar position have to keep their successes hidden because they would have the reverse, almost threatening effect.

This awareness means that the female managers must negotiate their way around boundaries that do not exist for their male equivalents.

Sexuality emerged as an intensely powerful theme from this thesis in the reproduction of gendered power relations. The most influential dimensions were the continued assumption of women's primary role in society, the dominance of heterosexuality and the role of physical body shape in determining gendered identity.

SUMMARY - SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST ?

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent that gender power relations are reproduced or transformed across two sport related organisations, one a public leisure centre and the second a private manufacturer of sport organisations. Both this study and pay differentials indicate that, while women have made vast inroads to the world of work, significant differences still exist between men and women.

The growth of the service sector, reflecting a growth in jobs for women has not necessarily heralded a brave new start for female employment. Rather than proffering new opportunities for women, within this study service work reconfirms, for both men and women, gender specific roles. Also unravelled was an allocation of work which draws strength from an all round acceptance of the unspoken role of women's bodies. I also demonstrated that the sport sector provides ideological support for the reproduction of gender power relations which are located within invisible gendered bodies.

This thesis unravelled three key strategies through which gender power relations are reproduced rather than transformed. Silent boundaries, exclusivity (via trivialisation, marginalisation, subordination and complicity) and a logic of difference are all involved in the interaction of identities, bodies and sexualities within a broader structure of gender. The location of the organisations in a sport-related environment highlighted the depths under which the logic of difference is hidden.

Three key identities emerged across each organisation, identities through which the dynamics of gender power relations are captured at a broad organisational level. A further identity which served to consolidate male advantage, was that of class. Elements of class identity were active in the creation of an elite golf group at Sporting Goods while also supporting the lunchtime football club in the warehouse. In a similar way the sub-culture of working class lads at Past Times emerged as a route by which they could celebrate their gendered differences. Common to both organisations in the reproduction of gender power relations were sport and sexual identities. At Past Times organisational, sexual and sporting identities serve to reproduce rather than transform gender power relations. These identities are not fixed, rather they symbolise ongoing battles around the construction of gender and sexual relations.

The most powerful component in the reproduction of gender power relations across both organisations is a logic of difference located in static bodies. By static bodies I refer to the immovable boundaries which exist for the majority of staff in both companies around their construction of the terms male and female. The location of Past Times and Sporting Goods in the sport sector compounds this dynamic through the daily reminder of what constitutes, in Western society, fit and healthy gendered bodies. At Past Times the reminder was served through customers using the facilities and at Sporting Goods through organisational literature and life size pictures of athletes around the buildings.

Despite women making great strides across the world of work over the last few decades, it is almost as if the gendered boundaries have become more silent and powerful in an era dominated by a legal/social framework encouraging a more equal society. The ways in which everybody plays a role in the legitimisation of gendered boundaries are so well hidden, that even though I set out to roll back the layers of analysis to the body it was a very difficult task. The main difficulty arises from the continual reproduction of a logic of difference through work in which every single person plays a role. Furthermore, the under-pinning logic is based on partial truths across specific constructions of gendered capabilities and bodies.

Men retain the numerical dominance across organisations and in sport participation. If any one has power of any sort or taken for granted advantages, it would be illogical to think that they would not resist it being reduced or withdrawn. In a very particular and unique way, sport continues to provide opportunities for men to benefit from these advantages by providing them with a masculine identity, even when they do not have the sporting ability to support it. Simultaneously, women suffer from the opposite dynamic, in that there is a taken for granted assumption that they cannot play sport, even in the face of immense ability and success.

Post-structuralists discuss how we can be active in the construction of our identities instead of passively reacting to the acts upon us (Bradley, 1996). Bradley's notion of fragmented identities provides a way of understanding the ways in which gender and class operate to sustain an overall dynamic of male advantage and female subordination across the two case study organisations. Both the golf club and football clubs demonstrate a merging of class and sporting identities to consolidate male benefit, while the lads in Past Times draw heavily on their working class identity to differentiate themselves from the rest. While the sporting identity confers greater kudos on men across both organisations, elements of this identity clash for women and create a maelstrom of dynamics. Rather than celebrate sporting identities, women in management at Past Times hide their ability in sport to avoid conflict, while at Sporting Goods outstanding achievements are over-looked by male equivalents. The dynamics of sport identities continue to provide positive experiences for men, reinforcing the patriarchal nature of sport cultures while women continue to be evaluated by different measures and differentiated from men.

While great gains have been made in the opportunities of work for men and women, we live in a world dominated by practices which perpetuate a reality where gender difference is acceptable. Conducting this research project in the sport industry highlighted the role of the body and the ways in which the taken for granted gendered attributes of the body are part of our everyday common sense. While progress will continue across society for greater equality of opportunities, running against the tide of change will be a logic of difference. The power of

the logic of difference is under-pinned by the accepted construction of the 'body' both in sport and work.

SPORTING DIFFERENCES: THE STRENGTH OF COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

Contrasting two sport related organisations across the public and private sectors provided the platform to reveal some important tensions in the construction and reproduction of gender power relations. Hegemonic masculinity prevailed at both organisations across the different sectors. A comparative analysis allowed the extent to which the body elusively underpins a gendered logic of difference through both sport and sport related work to emerge. Furthermore, the critical role sport itself plays in the reproduction of gender power relations became clear.

This research provided a basis for the analysis of gender power relations across sport related work. The deep seated nature of the role of the body in gendered relations now requires greater examination, both within the various contexts of sport (such as government sport agencies, national associations and voluntary organisations) and beyond these sport boundaries. Analysis of sport related employment within male dominated organisations, for example the prison service and the armed forces, would develop current conceptualisations of the role of sport in the maintenance of male myths and female subordination and the possibilities for transformation in gender power relations. Beyond this, analysis of the role of sport in strengthening gendered relationships both within and across work is a fertile avenue for future research.

Finally, while the body remained elusive, it clearly plays a critical role in the development of gendered relationships. To this end, there is a need for far greater attention to the ways in which the body continues to dictate the ways in which gender and gendered relationships are constructed both within the sport environment and beyond.

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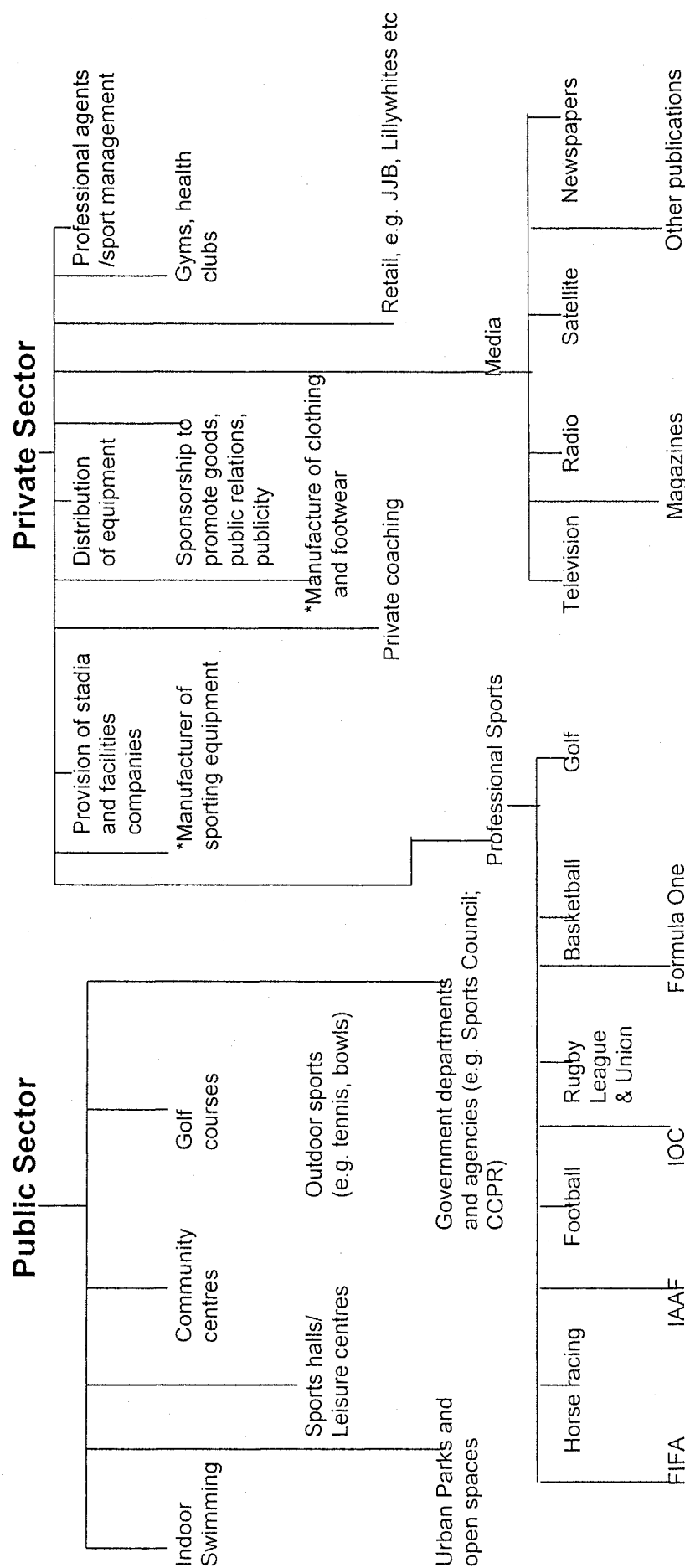
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APPENDIX I

SPORT ORGANISATIONS

APPENDIX I

Organisations Constituting Public and Private Sectors in Sport



*These were identified as the largest and most important aspects of commercial supply (Gratton, & Taylor, 1992)

APPENDIX II

PILOT QUESTIONNAIRE

Pilot: Pre-interview questionnaire

Personal details

Current job:

Main duties:

Please list the training opportunities which you have benefited from (a) in this job; (b) previously.

(a)

(b)

Please give a brief outline of your education and qualifications:

Marital Status: (please circle the appropriate answer)

Single Married Divorced Widowed Living with partner

Family: Yes No
(please state ages of any children):

How old are you?

Up to 25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 56+ ☐
Work Details:

How many hours are you contracted to work per week?

How many hours do you work per week?

How many breaks do you have in a normal working day?

Do you usually have a lunch break?

How long for?

Where do you spend it?

Please list factors which you perceive as helping your career development:

Please list factors which you see as being detrimental/blocking your career development:

Thank you for your help.

APPENDIX III

PILOT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Pilot Interview Schedule

Recruitment

How did you get to where you are?
How long do you think you will stay?
Do you enjoy it?
Have you been promoted?

Current responsibilities

What does your current job involve?
Freedom? Constraints?
Are you involved in recruitment?
 How are jobs advertised? (Word of mouth?)
 How did you find out about the job here?

How much influence do you have in the organisation?
What determines influence in the organisation?

How is pay determined?

Company policies - do you know of any?
 Which are you directly effected by?

Has your movement up the scale been as fast as you would have liked?
Have other people who have joined the organisation either with you, or after you, moved up as quickly, the same or slower? Why do you think that is?

Relationships

Who do you report to?
How would you describe your relationship with those above you? Below you? With staff you do not directly work with?

Do you find you change your behaviour with some people? How?
What is your relationships like with clients/customers?
 Do you find you change your behaviour with some people? How?
 Do you notice customers treating members of staff in different ways? How?

Are you happy with the way things are between staff? (Both on your level and at other ones)

Networking - do you belong to any organisations related to work?
What kind of social groups are there at work (single sex, mixed, sport oriented)?

Is there any key person/people who has/have influence(d) your job/career progression?

Perceptions

Are there any jobs which are typically help by men? Women? Split?
Are there any jobs from which you think men/women are excluded?

What are the main sources of conflict between staff?

Do you think there is anyone who does not really fit into this organisation? Why? Conversely, is there anyone who gets on really well? Tell me about them (characteristics, attitude etc.)

Physical characteristics

Do you think body image is important

	for you personally
	for others in the organisation
	for customers?

What kind of references are made to men and women - between staff, between customers, between customers and staff?

What characteristics are emphasised? how?

What are the expectations in terms of dress, appearance?
Are there differences between levels, within levels, between and within men and women?

Sexual harassment - do you know of any instances of sexual harassment amongst your colleagues? (Verbal/mental aspects are important - how to get at that?)

General

Does being male or female effect your experiences at work?

Personal circumstances (married, single, children, etc.)
expectations of you? Your expectations?

Ambitions for the future (future of the organisation?)

APPENDIX IV

QUESTIONNAIRE

Pre-interview Questionnaire

Please fill out the following with as much detail as possible. If you feel that a question does not apply to you please move on to the next question. Thank you for your help.

1. Are you a member of any sports clubs external to work?

Yes ☐ (Please go to question 2) No ☐ (Please go to question 3)

2. If yes, which ones?

.....

.....

.....

3. Do you take part in sport in connection with work colleagues?

Yes ☐ (Please go to question 4) No ☐ (Please go to question 5)

4. If yes, what?

.....

.....

.....

5. Please list your history of (up to and including current) involvement in sport:

.....

.....

.....

6. What is your current marital status: (please circle the appropriate answer)

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Living with partner
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Do you have any family? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes please state ages of any children:

.....

.....

8. How old are you?

Up to 25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 56+ ☐

9. What is your present job?

.....

10. How long have you worked for DIS SPORTS DIVISION?

.....

11. Have you been on any training courses while in this job?

Yes ☐ (Please go to question 12) No ☐ (Please go to question 13)

12. Please list the courses you have been on on your current job (in the last 3 years):

.....

.....

.....

.....

13. Please enter your qualifications below (e.g. O/A levels, HND, OND, Btec, GNVQ, Degree, Post graduate education)

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you very much for your co-operation, please return the questionnaire in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.

APPENDIX V

PAST TIMES: INTRODUCTION LETTER

«FirstName» «LastName»
«JobTitle»
«Company»
«Address1»
«Address2»
«Post_code»

29 April 1997

Dear «FirstName» «LastName»

I am from the University of Northumbria in Newcastle doing a project on work in different sport environments. I am particularly interested in comparing people's work experiences across public and private settings. I hope to talk to as many employees as possible to understand issues concerning people like you who work in the leisure industry. I would appreciate your co-operation in achieving this.

I will be asking questions about these topics in a short interview. Employees will be asked about the job, how they feel about it and what they think about their workplace. All information will be completely confidential.

has approved the interviews being conducted during work time at
I hope you will be willing to discuss your work with me on

If this is not convenient could you please let me know on (0191) 227 3043. Prior to this would you be kind enough to fill out the enclosed questionnaire and bring it with you to the meeting.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely

Lucy Baxter

Enc.: questionnaire

APPENDIX VI

SPORTING GOODS: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Facsimile : 

ACG DEW
19 September, 1997

Dear

Following on from my letter of the 29th August, I'd like to share with you one of the ways I believe we can start to **"Achieve an Ever Improving Performance in all the Measurable Areas of our Business"**.

Having spoken to a number of you now one of the main themes coming through is that we don't COMMUNICATE too well on an internal basis. To me that means we are not sharing with each other what's going on, what's happening and what's going to happen in relationship with the business and the Industry in which we work.

I outlined the Vision of the Group in my last letter which is all well and good, but I believe we each need to know what that means to us and what our role is in delivering that Vision.

To help us further understand your views on your jobs and how you feel about management and the organisation in general we are fortunate in having available the services of Lucy Baxter who is currently completing a Study for her PhD, which is looking at 'how changes in the work environment have effected employees'. This study is totally independant and will be absolutely confidential. She will be meeting about 20% of you and talking to you about your job and how you feel about the organisation.

These meetings will start week commencing 29 September and as I say will be completely confidential.

It really is important that you let Lucy know exactly how you feel as the most important aspect of her work is that the Overall Results and Findings will be fed back to everybody.


You have my commitment to listening to what you have to say and to working with you to Improve what we currently do and to making this business a **BETTER PLACE TO WORK AT**.

Lucy's commitment is to have ready the Feedback Information by the first week in November and to help her get started she would like you to spend around 10 minutes completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the Post Paid envelope to her University in Newcastle by Friday 26 September 1997.

Many thanks in advance for your help, we really do want to hear what you have to say and then make sure we do something about it to help us all **IMPROVE OUR OWN PERFORMANCE** and by doing so **IMPROVE THE COMPANY'S PERFORMANCE**

'BEYOND OUR BEST EXPECTATIONS'.

Kind regards
Yours sincerely


Managing Director

APPENDIX VII

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

APPENDIX VII

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

History

How long have you worked for *?
How long have you been in your current job?
How much/ have you seen the organisation change in that time?

Current Job

Job title
Main characteristics
Typical working week
How much do you enjoy it?
Do you spend much time in meetings?
Do you spend much time working with other staff? (working relationships)
How demanding is your job?
In what way are your abilities used?
What would you describe as the least attractive aspects of your job?
When do you feel pressurised?
Where do you see yourself in a few years time?

Entry

How did you hear about the job?
How were you recruited?

Organisational Change

What would you describe as the major changes you have seen at *?
How have these affected you? Your working relationships?
How have these affected your working conditions?
How have they affected the core values of *?
Has it had any impact on the staffing structure of the organisation?
Has the management style changed at all? In what ways?

Relationships

How is staff morale?
How do staff address each other?
Is there much light hearted banter?
Do you think you behave differently with different people? In different situations?
Is there much socialising outside/inside work?
How is information distributed?

Customers

Do you have much contact with customers?
What satisfaction do you get from customers?
Can you describe the staff training you have for dealing with customers?
Who will solve a problem if you cannot?

Sport

What opportunities are there to be involved in sport through work?

Who are involved in sport in *?

Are you involved in any sport outside work?

How much does involvement in sport influence your job?

Physical Characteristics

What personal expectations are made of you?

Do you think cleanliness, clothes, jewellery, appearance, etc is important for all roles in *?

Can you wear whatever you want to work?

Is there anyone that stands out? Why?

General

Do you think there are any kinds of work which are easier for men/women?

If you were asked by a prospective recruit to be very honest about working in this organisation, how would you describe it?

What would you say are the main differences between groups of staff?

APPENDIX VIII

CONSENT FORM

Social Sciences Research Centre

6 North Street East
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8ST
Telephone (0191) 227 4606
Fax (0191) 227 4608

Direct Telephone Line

Consent for participation in an interview as part of a research project

I state that I am over 18 years of age and agree to participate in research being conducted by Lucy Baxter of the University of Northumbria, Division of Sport and Recreation, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. I further grant permission for the tape recording of my participation in that research.

Purpose of the project

The study is investigating individual's work experiences in sport related jobs across the public and private sectors.

Procedure

The procedure for the individual is to participate in an in-depth open ended interview conducted by the investigator. During the interview the subject is invited to discuss and describe issues such as their experiences within their job and their attitude about their workplace.

I acknowledge that the nature and purpose of my participation in the study have been fully explained to me and that Lucy Baxter has offered to answer any questions which I may ask about the procedures to be followed. I understand that I may withdraw this permission at any time and that any recordings of my participation will be erased at once upon my request. I also understand that all materials collected as a result of my participation will be used only for research purposes, that they will be available only to Lucy Baxter and that my anonymity will be protected at all times. I freely and voluntarily consent to take part in this research project.

If I have any questions, comments or concerns I can contact Lucy Baxter at the address listed above.

Signature of subject

Date

Witness

Date

APPENDIX IX

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

INTERVIEWEES

	Past Times	Sporting Goods
Level	Name	Name
Senior Management	Barry	Jason
Senior Management	Belinda	Jack
Senior Management	Ben	James
Senior Management	Barbara	Jeffrey
Senior Management		Jasper
Middle Management		Katherine
Middle Management		Karl
Middle Management		Keith
Middle Management		Ken
Lower Management	Camilla	Lance
Lower Management	Carter	Lauren
Lower Management	Caroline	Lucy
Lower Management	Celia	Larry
Lower Management		Lewis
Lower Management		Leonard
Lower Management		Leroy
Lower Management		Liam
SF Senior	Daniel	Magnus
SF Senior	David	Marie
SF Senior	Daisy	Maddy
SF Senior	Dawn	Maisie
SF Senior	Dean	Malcolm
SF Senior		Marshall
SF Senior		Mark
SF Senior		Molly
SF Senior		Matthew
Shopfloor	Edward	Nanette
Shopfloor	Edmund	Natalie
Shopfloor	Eldon	Nell
Shopfloor	Edith	Niamh
Shopfloor	Elaine	Nathaniel
Shopfloor	Elroy	Nick
Shopfloor	Elizabeth	Nerys
Shopfloor	Elise	Nicola
Shopfloor	Elvis	Nolene
Shopfloor	Emmanuel	Norma
Shopfloor	Emily	Nikita
Shopfloor	Erica	Noreen
Shopfloor	Erla	Nuala
Shopfloor	Enid	Norbert
Shopfloor	Ethel	
Shopfloor	Emlyn	
Shopfloor	Eric	
Shopfloor	Estelle	
Shopfloor	Erasmus	
Shopfloor	Enola	
Shopfloor	Eunice	
Shopfloor	Ewan	

APPENDIX X

FREE NODES

Appendix X

Free nodes from Past Times and Sporting Goods

Past Times

perceptions
morale
job structure
communication
mission statement
private companies
socials
turnover
summer programme
consultation
boredom
lack of support
standards
appraisals
history
identity
continuity
capability
monitoring of information
tensions
security
physical work

tendering
trust
management
customers
training
positives
outside work
customer care
attitude
responsibility
weekday/end splits
goals
motivation
standards
profile
pay
gossip
surveillance
self regulation
professionalism
adaptation
uniform

casual
conflict
CCT
sport involvement
constraints
negatives
induction
rogues
staff room
image
union
volunteering
history
atmosphere
sickness
relationships
support
visibility
protection
dependence
reproduction
happiness

Sporting Goods

management of information
acknowledgement of over time
segmentation of information
social
communication
perceptions of the company
commitment
aggravations
male impact on opportunities
MBO
warring factions
trading relations
images of professionalism
influence of women
job structure
divisions
personal backgrounds
salary
equipment
consultants
attitude
support
career development
mis-trust
responsibility
control
holidays
leadership
awareness of role
formalisation
pressure
induction
sport involvement
sales
change

resistance
inconsistencies
access to information
segmentation of organisation
promotion
flexibility
support
canteen
inequitable systems
management/staff split
industry
contacts
industry structure
gender issues
attitude
management of staff
identity
benefits
office layout
communication
gossip
appraisals
processes
using sport in business
dis-organisation
personal histories
surveillance
culture
confidentiality
experience
gender difference
motivation
breaks
exhibitions
satisfaction

time constraints
warehouse
understanding motivations
status related
recruitment
motivation
morale
route to training
incentives
temporary staff
customers
professionalism
gender distribution
frustrations
relations
personnel issues
ambition
head office
redesign
trust
fractions
inefficiencies
team work
trading relations
systems
networking
respect
judgement
subordination
uncertainty
flexibility
expectations
sick leave
standardisation
networks

APPENDIX XI

COMMUNICATION AT SPORTING GOODS FROM THE MD

Facsimile : [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
29 August, 1997

«Title» «Known_As» «Surname»
«Address_Line_1»
«Address_Line_2»
«Town»
«County»
«Post_Code»

Dear

I'm taking this opportunity of introducing myself to you, and look forward to meeting you over the next few weeks.

Whilst being aware of the changes that have taken place over the last couple of months and recognising the disturbing influences this can have, we can't afford to take our 'Eye off the Ball', and must strive continuously to deliver the kind of all round Customer Service that will make our customers want to buy more and more from us. The delivery of that Customer Service has to be the shared responsibility of everybody in our business.

Whilst not making any wild promises about what we'll be doing in the future, I do assure you that everything we do will be done to 'Achieve an Ever Improving Performance in all the Measurable Areas of our Business'.

The [REDACTED] has a Vision and it is; *to create a world class sports and leisure products business*


**TO CREATE A WORLD CLASS SPORTS AND LEISURE PRODUCTS BUSINESS,
FOCUSING ON PROFITABLE SALES GROWTH,
WITH A 'GO FOR IT', NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE CULTURE
THAT WILL DEVELOP THE BUSINESS BEYOND OUR BEST EXPECTATIONS.**

We must share that vision and aim for our team to be the leading deliverer of that vision. I look forward to hearing from you as to how we best go about achieving that vision, and to working with you to develop a 'Way we do Things Around Here' culture that builds a business we can be proud of.

We currently have tough Sales and Financial Forecasts to achieve for the year end, and I know that plans are in place to ensure that we achieve those Forecasts and I'll look forward to celebrating with you when the Forecasts are achieved.

I'm personally delighted to have become part of the Team and look forward to us sharing together the Fantastic feeling of **ACHIEVEMENT** when we succeed in what we set out to do and then in taking our performance **BEYOND OUR BEST EXPECTATIONS**.

Kind regards
Yours sincerely


Managing Director